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THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM JERDAN.

Author of "The National Portrait Gallery," 4 vols., 4to; "Voyage to the Isle of Elba," 8vo.; "The Paris Spectator," 3 vols., 12mo; "The Rutland Papers," 4to; "The Perth Papers," 4to, &c. &c. &c.



Painted by G. H. Harlow.

Engraved by H. Robinson.

William Sheridan
1843

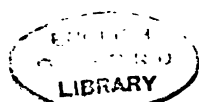
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THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
of
WILLIAM JERDAN.

VOL. I.



Richd.

London:
ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE & CO
25, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1852.



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THE
AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
WILLIAM JERDAN,

M.R.S.L., CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE REAL ACADEMIA DE LA HISTORIA
OF SPAIN, &c. &c.

WITH HIS

Literary, Political, and Social Reminiscences and Correspondence

DURING THE LAST FIFTY YEARS.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE, & Co., 25, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1852.

LONDON :
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

TO

THE RIGHT HON. SIR FREDERICK POLLOCK,
LORD CHIEF BARON, &c. &c. &c.

—
MY DEAR FRIEND,

I beg your acceptance of this tribute of respect to your public eminence and affection for your private virtues. The first I can only offer in common with the universal voice of your country; but the last I hope you will allow me to boast as a privilege and cherish as a happiness peculiarly my own. The knowledge of each other for more than half a century may have made me somewhat garrulous in speaking of our early times; but age has not altered nor abated the feelings of cordial esteem and regard which began in youth, were increased in middle life, and now warm my breast with grateful and kindest emotions towards you and all who look up to and love you. If the most sincere attachment can justify a dedication, you are too upright a judge to reject the plea of


My dear Friend,

Your's most faithfully,

W. JERDAN.

April 16th, 1852.

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ERRATUM.

In the chapter on Paris in 1814, p. 175 et seq., for "Parris" of Hamburgh,
read, Parish.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

For many a lad I knew is dead,
And many a lass grown old ;
And when I think upon the past
My weary heart is cold.—CAPTAIN MORRIS.

BIOGRAPHY! MEMOIRS OF SELF! The *I* substituted for the *WE*, during so many years my familiar and protective critical plural, is a change of more importance than I could have expected.

I have had, it is true, some practice and experience in biographical writing, and was well acquainted with the difficulties with which it was beset ; but, until I took the pen in hand for my autobiography, I had not the faintest conception of the embarrassments and obstacles which stood in the way of a satisfactory performance of the altered task. The consideration and reserve due to others, the candour and veracity due to the public, and the fairness and justice due to myself, formed a combination of elements not easily to be reconciled

in a Whole, which should fulfil the useful purposes of such a work. Above all, the almost uninterrupted style of egoism—and being, indeed, of necessity, the hero of my own history—filled me with such feelings of repugnance, that I again and again abandoned the design ; and it is only the force of circumstances which I shall offer as an apology for commencing, with the hope of completing it.

Still I have to plead several other inducements, including the ancient barefaced one,—of the earnest request of friends, who have thought that my varied career, intimately mixed up with every prominent class of society during the period of half a century, must furnish materials for a pleasant and instructive production. I am myself more than half persuaded of the truth of this ; and if memory and talent do not fail me, I ambitiously trust to leave a few volumes behind me, which may be a more enduring monument than could be raised from any multitude of my efforts dispersed in periodical literature, which seldom can be analysed and condensed to the credit of even the most gifted contributor, who has not adopted more solid forms for the exercise of his abilities. Were this likely or possible, I should be willing to rest my name, for a short era, and yet as much as I could expect of posthumous remembrance, upon my numerous essays in various esteemed publications, and, especially, upon my labours in the “ Literary Gazette ” for thirty-four years ; but as there is no chance of such a distinct separation of the wheat from the chaff, I am the better inclined to the endeavour to connect my pathway and doings in the world with matters of general interest, and persons respecting whom their country must long desire to learn as much as can be told. When I state that my juvenile associates numbered among others not unknown to fame, such individuals as the late Lord High Chancellor

of England, Lord Truro, and the Lord Chief Baron ; that years of my middle life were past in confidential intercourse with the statesmen of the day, such as Lord Farnborough, Huskisson, Arbuthnot, Cooke, and still later, with many of the eminent characters who have held high places in the government of the country; and that, both in the preceding and later periods of my course, I enjoyed the friendship and unreserved intimacy of George Canning, and the regard and familiar acquaintance of almost every person of celebrity in the land—political, scientific, artistic, literary, or otherwise remarkable,—it may not be too much to predicate that I have a great deal to communicate worthy of popular and even national acceptance. Without presumption, I can truly assert that my stores are very considerable both in variety and value, and I hope to make a good use of my materials.

With regard to that perplexing subject, MYSELF, I should certainly have avoided it more than I shall do, had I not a great object in view, and, as I feel, a paramount duty to perform, in executing the purpose I have undertaken. My life has been one of much vicissitude, of infinite struggle, and latterly of very grave misfortune. On looking back from the harassed, would it were the calm untroubled goal of three-score and ten years, I can trace with a faithful pencil much that has been owing to mistakes, to errors, to faults, and to improvidence on my own side ; and more to misconceptions, injustice, wrongs, and persecutions, unprovoked by any act of mine, on the part of others. I believe that the retrospect may be very serviceable to my fellow-creatures, and most signally so to those who have embarked, or are disposed to embark, in the pursuits of literature as a provision for the wants of life. Of all the multitude I have known who leant upon this crutch as a sole support, I could not specify ten who ever attained

anything like a desirable status either in fortune or society. On the contrary, the entire class may be assured that although felony may be more hazardous, literature is, of the two, by far the most unprofitable profession.

What I have done and undergone may teach a lesson of pointed instruction ; and if I rescue even a few from the too certain fate, I shall not regret where I have confessed my transgressions and opened my heart for their guidance. I am conscious that productions of this kind are rarely more than popular for a limited period ; and then are to be found in libraries for future references, perhaps, by authors who may be investigating portions of the literary history of past times. In this way they are occasionally and partially revived again and again, and are so far useful ; but even within my own experience of noticing autobiographical memoirs in the "Literary Gazette," it is but poor encouragement to confess that I do not remember any example of one of the class creating aught beyond a temporary sensation. In fact very few biographies, and only of important personages, do last long enough to have any effect upon succeeding generations. It seems as if the good and the evil were barely sufficient for their own date ; and that whatever grandchildren might attempt to teach their grandmothers, they are quite inapt to receive instruction from their venerable progenitors of either sex.

My small hope to prolong my vitality and memory a little farther, rests on the foundation of my having known and been associated, as I have stated, with many memorable persons, and having been concerned in some remarkable events, such as rarely occur within the sphere of individuals of my station, besides being entrusted with the confidence of others, so as, I think, to enable me to throw some new lights on some very interesting topics. But for these con-

siderations, I believe that I should have been deterred from my task by the whimsical canon of my lamented friend Hood, who, in his *Death's Ramble*, informs me that He (Death)

— found an author writing his life,
But he let him write no further—
For Death, who strikes whenever he likes,
Is jealous of all self murder.

And this quotation leads me to state in this prefatory chapter, that I foresee my narrative must be of a very mixed, and almost incongruous character: for the grave and gay have alternated so rapidly with me, that I never can keep them far asunder. With Gay I would not state (especially on a tombstone) that Life was a jest: but I am free to affirm, that even amidst its most grievous afflictions and deepest tragedies, there always runs a series of accompaniments allied to the jocular and ridiculous, which would almost create laughter under the ribs of Death. For myself I can say that not many men have enjoyed so much of pleasure and endured so much of pain as I have done. I have drained the *Circè-cup* to the lees, but I still gratefully acknowledge the enchanting draught of its exquisite and transporting sweetness, in spite of the emptiness of its froth, and the bitterness of its dregs.

Yet is there much of sadness in the reflection of bygone years, protracted to the span which mine have now reached. In looking back, it appears to me as if I had gone through circles of society, and cycles of events. I look around and ask, Where are they who began their hopeful career with me? Where are they? Oh, how few have threaded the trying path, and are now among the living! How many have perished and are forgotten; or, at most, but momentarily recalled by the converse of old friends, who are so shortly to follow them into a like oblivion! No need have

I, or men of the same period of life, to go, like Hervey, among the Tombs for Meditations. Every bustling street and teeming thoroughfare, every home visit and social meeting, every private party and public occasion utter silent voices which speak mournfully of the absent, and trumpet-tongued of the dead. Friend after friend has departed, and when struck by misfortune, by trouble, by sickness, in vain do we look around for the succour that relieved, the sympathy that supported, the love that consoled; all, or nearly all, are gone, and we are left alone—alone!

In this melancholy mood I stop to ask myself who will be the readers, who the judges and critics, of what I am about to record? Will even those who have known me find interest in the re-awakened memories of scenes which we have shared together. Will those to whom the writer is but a name, bestow a thought or a care upon his joys and sorrows, for the sake of analogous joys and sorrows of their own, which his narrative may recall. I shall resolve, however, that such themes must occupy no more than a small portion of it. For it may be that the former have grown too old, or cold, and too much changed for the emotion; and that the latter will be too little touched by what is strange to, and does not concern them, to lend a listening ear to so simple and so universal a tale. The vicissitudes of the literary man have no striking points to attract the world's attention; he has no incidents, like those of the warrior, to fix the sense on perils, wonderful escapes, and dreadful catastrophes. His perils and catastrophes run on a dead level; and the only wonder would be how he could ever have any escape. Feelingly do I find it written by L. E. L. (in 1833): "The Poet may lament the flower that blows unseen in the desert, or the gem that is covered in the unfathomed caverns of ocean; but it is man himself

that crushes the flower and buries the gem to an extent unimagined in our philosophy. What glorious blossoms would expand, filling the earth with odours?—what brilliant jewels would be set on high, dazzling with light and lustre, were they not nipped in the bud, and destroyed in the mine, by the harsh, rude influence of the living world? Who lifts the fallen—who cherishes the desponding—who animates the weary—who encourages the fainting—who pities and solaces the unfortunate—who sustains the enthusiastic—who is the friend of talent—who the idolator of genius? One of a thousand? No. The censorious detractor, the scoffer, the oppressor, the unfeeling, the selfish, the apathetic, all cross their paths and lay the weight of doom upon their aspirations. We are, indeed, but shadows, and the very shadows we pursue are placed beyond our reach by our fellow-creatures, who are engaged in the pursuit of similar phantoms, and have only time on their way, to baulk, and impede, and throw down others, till the scene of life presents but one mass of hope ending in disappointment, of struggle and defeat."

Nevertheless the sufferers long to unburden memory of its load, as the ill in health fly to a physician, or the sick in soul to a confessor.

In my own case I seek neither medicine nor absolution. What my own hand is now writing may not, in human probability, meet the eye of the friendly, the unknown, or the inimical (if any such remain after the grave has closed), till the author is alike unconscious of the blessing of sympathy, the coldness of apathy, or the injustice of enmity. The eulogy, the neutrality and the insult will be of equal value to him, and only of some importance to those near and dear to him who inherit his blood and cherish his memory.

CHAPTER II.

CHILDHOOD.

Time rolls her ceaseless course ! The race of yore
That danced our infancy upon their knee,
And told our marvelling boyhood legends store
Of their strange ventures happed by land or sea ;
How are they blotted from the things that be !—SCOTT.

There is a place in childhood that I remember well.—LOVER.

ALTHOUGH my birth, parentage, and education cannot pretend to public interest, yet as they are requisite for the development of my design, I claim excuse for devoting a space to them ; and if I then hasten more *in medias res* for the sake of later affairs, it will not be without an intention of retracing my steps at a future period, should circumstances attendant upon this publication warrant the retrospect. At present, perhaps, some critics may fancy I have said more than enough on the subject : but it illustrates more than
- “ Sixty years ago.”

I was born on the 16th of April, 1782, being the third son and seventh child of John Jerdan and Agnes Stuart, both of Kelso, in the county of Roxburgh, Scotland. If the spot of birth could implant a love of the beautiful in nature and perfection of pastoral scenery, that love must have been inherent in me, for I first saw the light in a room which hung over the Tweed, opposite to its junction with the Teviot, and certainly one of the sweetest rural localities

upon the face of the earth. The mansion itself was one of those large old-fashioned houses, with the pressure of two centuries resting upon its roof, and with apartments large enough—after the family moved into a modern cottage residence, built closely adjoining in a pretty garden off the river—to be converted into places for town meetings, dancing schools, ball-rooms, and warehouses. It rejoiced in the name of “Lang Linkie,” and is still, I believe, in existence as a distillery, and no ornament to the site. The new cottage was also most beautifully situated on the banks of the Tweed, opposite a lovely island, or “Ana,” on the fork between the rivers. Old Roxburgh Castle was just beyond, Fleurs, the magnificent seat of the Duke of Roxburgh, up the river on the right; and the Eildon Hills in the distance. There was a sweet garden, high brick wall, and fine fruits, not common elsewhere. Close by was the old family residence of “Lang Linkie,” the gable end of which was washed by the river, as was the garden wall of the new abode, with the cheerful town-mill immediately below, with a picturesque “cauld” or weir.

My father was an only son, and descended from a long line of respectable landowners, of small estate. They held their property in feu, as deeds ranging over three hundred years bear witness, and appear to have been always ranked among the leading inhabitants of their native place. Desirous of improving, though, in fact, his easy temper and large family ultimately led to his diminishing his inheritance, he obtained the appointment of purser to an East Indiaman when a young man, and proceeded to London to enter upon his duties. But these were not the days of railroads or rapid intelligence, and whether the only son was indulged too long in his outfitting by maternal fondness and fears or not, certain it is that he did not arrive at his destination

till too late to sail with the vessel on its voyage to India. To return home would have been to become a laughing-stock, and therefore, having the means, he resolved on a volunteer voyage, and after some stay in London, about 1760-61, took that trip, instead of the grand tour, and visited the East as a private gentleman, when such expeditions were, indeed, exceedingly rare. The late eminent merchant, Mr. John Tunno, was an officer in the ship in which he went, and he not only formed a friendship with that gentleman, but with Mr. Kerr, afterwards of Kippilaw, and Governor of Bombay, which was marked by a cadetcy to my eldest brother, and lasted to the end of their lives. On his return he sought no farther active life, though a person of excellent abilities, and, in after years, of great reading and solid information, but settled indolently down, the laird of a few fields, producing a revenue which, in our statistical day, would be thought no very satisfactory provision for the marriage state and its consequences. Marry, however, he did, and one of the best of wives that ever fell to the lot of man. She was handsome and possessed of very superior talents; and as there can be few families in Scotland without some pretence to lofty lineage, her progenitors claimed descent from a no less exalted and improper ancestor than a certain(?) Abbot of Melrose, and the natural son of a certain(?) King James! How this was made out I cannot tell, but the supposition was sustained by several remarkable* resemblances between branches of her family and portraits of the royal

* My own dear and lamented second* daughter, Mary, the late Mrs. Power, was so like Mr. Traill's portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, that when it was brought to London and exhibited in St. George's Hospital, she was frequently invited thither for the sake of the comparison, and much playful amusement derived from the circumstance. In a fancy-ball dress at Sir William Beechey's, the resemblance was observed to be still more striking.

race, thus said to be consigned to plebeian perpetuation. At all events her father entertained Prince Charles and his Staff in the Forty-five, and would have been hanged for his pains, but that the father of her future husband was equally strong on the Hanoverian side, and had influence enough to save his townsman and friend from Jacobite martyrdom.

Noticing this legendary genealogy for all it is worth, and that is not more than a sample of very common Scottish nationality and aspiration to distinguished descent, I proceed to my earliest recollection of my father, who was then Baron Baillie of the township of Kelso and neighbourhood, a feudal office of consideration and magisterial authority, before the division of the country into county jurisdictions, with separate sheriffs, deputes, and sessions for the determination of civil suits and the trial of criminal or other offenders. The Duke of Roxburgh, as feudal lord, was thus represented and his powers exercised in the holding of weekly courts, sitting in the town hall, and administering justice with great simplicity of forms and investigation. As a picture not yet sixty years old, I may describe this somewhat primitive semicircular bench ; raised on a dais at the upper end of the hall, the centre occupied by the Baillie, and about three yards from him, one end equally distinguished as the invariable seat of a harmless, tolerated idiot or person of weak intellect, named from the place of his birth Willy *Hawick*, and unquestionably the original of Walter Scott's Goose Gibby. I am confirmed in this opinion not only by the *vraisemblance* of the portraits, but by the circumstance that when Scott resided, in his holiday boyhood and later youth, with his relation, Captain Scott of Rosebank, close to Kelso, both were frequent visitors at our cottage home, where *Hawick* was a

licensed intrusionist, and must have attracted the notice of the great painter of Scottish life.* This character was, it is strange to say, almost natural and general in the country towns and villages; and Willy was so largely indulged by everybody, old and young, that his worst vagaries were tolerated and laughed at. Thus he often loudly expressed his approbation of the judge's decisions, to the constant amusement of the court and its president; and I remember one occasion when he smashed two very large and valuable China mandarins, brought home by my father and set on high in the parlour, because they nodded and made faces at him, having stolen unobserved from the kitchen into their location!

Mr. Scott's intimacy with the family continued for a number of years whenever he visited this part of the country, and there was even an early flirtation between him and my eldest sister, who did not like the "lame laddie." But a more interesting proof of intimate acquaintance than boy and girl fancies, whether real or conjectural, is contained in a letter from the mighty minstrel to myself, in recommending his son Charles to my cicerone-attentions when he came to London, in which he tells me that my father was "the first person who encouraged his love of poetry!" My father, indeed, in his limited provincial sphere, stood almost alone for a genuine and cultivated taste for literature; and when, at a few years later than the time of Scott, I, either from disposition or imitation, entered upon an ardent boyish research into Ballad and Border lore, my indulgent parent warmly fanned the flame, and took me to many an old weaver, cobbler, and aged crone, from whom I learnt many scraps of traditional song and legend, out of which, even now in advanced years, I could

* See Appendix A.

recollect enough to make a curious collection, reviving bits that I have never seen quoted in any publication.

My father was much respected and beloved. The lower classes looked to him as an indulgent friend, and from his position, though of barely competent income, he associated with the principal persons of the county : among these were John the "Book" Duke of Roxburgh, whose judicial substitute he was, and with whom I had the honour of taking my second day's dinner in London, and being shown his noble library, now the resort of the Windham Club in St. James's Square ;—Sir George Douglas, of Springwood Park, the county member, from whom I also received much hospitable attention on my début in town ;—Mr. Kerr, the inheritor of Kippilaw, an eminent Scottish solicitor and parliamentary agent, residing in Golden Square, and one of my earliest and kindest friends. I well remember also Admiral William Elliot of Monteviot, the vanquisher of Thurot, Admiral William Dickson of Sydenham, and other Scotts, Elliots, and Dicksons ; including General Dickson, the Admiral's brother, whose admirable good-nature is engraven on my mind for ever, as a frequent visitor to our cottage, and delighting the young brood by the sweetest performance on the Irish pipe, and enjoying the pleasure he so kindly communicated. It might be that a favourite cat, apparently a *fanatico per la musico*, added to the attractions ; for no sooner did the General commence playing, than it jumped upon his knee and sat there till every note was exhausted : and it may be mentioned as a curious anecdote in natural history, that the animal was so enamoured of the piping, as when taken from it into the garden as a test, it leapt through and broke a pane of glass in the parlour window, in order to regain its curious station. In fact, it realised the ancient sign of the Cat and Bagpipes ; which

probably was not a grotesque invention, but sprung from some similar feline attachment to the instrument.

Of my venerated parent I shall say little more. He died suddenly, in the night-time, after retiring to rest, in the autumn of 1796, when I was thirteen years old; and his funeral was attended by fifty or sixty of the most respectable inhabitants of the place and neighbourhood. I was at the time on a country visit, exploring the gipsy haunts of Yetholm and the legendary den of the Worm of Wormielaw.

He was, as I have observed, much beloved and respected; a gentleman of fine abilities thrown away in the indolence of a small provincial town, where he was the chief. Had he been called into the wide and busy world, he was well calculated to shine in it; but his habits were stirred by no stimulus. His residence was hospitably open to strangers, and particularly to the officers of regiments, then moving into quarters throughout the land. Those of English County regiments, such as the Sussex, were especially welcome, and I remember the first view the officers of this corps had from our garden, of the mode of washing by stout-limbed lasses trampling on the clothes in tubs by the river side. Their surprise at the novelty in Scottish customs, was very entertaining; and their astonishment and shouts of laughter, so long-continued and vehement, that they would hardly let them come in to dinner.

The Mid Lothian Cavalry and the 21st or Royal Scotch Fusileers, were also visitors and on intimate terms with the family. With the former, indeed, it had all but formed an alliance; my eldest sister, then a very handsome girl, having attracted the attentions of two of its officers, Mr. John Hay (son of Dr. Thomas Hay of Edinburgh, and one of the finest looking young men in Scotland), and Mr.

Peter Hamilton, a younger brother of Lord Belhaven. I believe my sister preferred the former, but a union with either would, under circumstances, have been imprudent, and so the love-making was discontinued till the route came and our much valued friends marched away. Above forty years after Hay and I met, accidentally, upon Granton Pier, and after staring at each other for a minute, rushed to a hearty recognition. He had been long in India married to a daughter of General Gowdie, and I had grown from boyhood to an elderly man : we renewed a friendship which lasted to his death. My sister, though the belle of the town, never married.

The distant retrospect of my father paints him to my mind's eye, in a few prominent situations : *ex. gr.* as a fine looking portly gentleman, who from the summit of the abbey which adorns the title-page of this volume,* and to the insecurity of which he and his assessor, Willie Hawick, were wont to commit prisoners who often escaped before morning, fired a pistol as the signal for Lunardi's balloon ascent,—the earliest impression left of my infant recollections, being then little beyond three years old ; as presiding at the cross on the 4th of June, when around the bull-ring assembled the respectable inhabitants to drink bumpers to the health of King George III., and toss their glasses back over their heads to be profaned by no other toast, unless luckily caught by the crowd of boys and mechanics ; as guiding me to parties for the collection of old poetry ; as walking with Robert Burns and calling me from play to

* For this charming illustration of the lovely scene in which my childhood and school-life was spent, I am indebted to the liberal kindness of Mr. Adam Black, the distinguished publisher of Edinburgh ; who, in thus placing one of Turner's sweetest views at my disposal, has conferred one of those obligations which do honour to the intercourse between booksellers and authors.—W. J.

be told who the admired poet was (I seem to recollect the very spot in the churchyard where the meeting took place, in 1787, when little more than five years of age, and my idea of the bard is most completely realised by the portrait of him in a broad-brimmed hat)*—and, lastly, as assisting in the family leave-taking of my eldest brother, John, in 1795, when he mounted his pony from the classic ground of Ednam,† and cantered off, rejoicing as a young soldier should, to set out on that journey to India, whence he never returned to gladden the hearts of those who wept to see him depart,—a noble, manly fellow, whose military career, till he died at the Cape of Good Hope, Colonel of the 5th Bombay Regiment, reflected honour upon his name and the service, in which a severe campaign in Cutch sapped his constitution, and sent him forth an invalid, for that native home which, denied by Providence to many anxious and earnest pray-ers, he was destined never more to behold.‡

That I was not more familiar with my father's domestic life arose from the circumstance of my having been adopted in childhood by a relative of my mother's, wife of Mr. Walker the Supervisor of Excise for the town and adjacent district, an office of responsibility in those days, yet one to which I paid but little deference. For, in truth, the good man was very indulgent, and allowed his wife to pursue that course of training which is generally known by the appellation of "quite spoiling" the party in charge. And I dwell upon this matter especially, because it exercised much influence over all my future years. Having more pence than my companions, being allowed to loiter and lag behind school hours, and being pampered and petted with or without reason, I naturally grew up petulant and self-willed; and it is only extraordinary that the process did not render me also vicious

* See Appendix B. † See Appendix C. ‡ See Appendix D.

and selfish. But I inherited my father's easiness of disposition, and it saved me from these greater evils, though not from consequent misfortunes.

As portion of the lesson I have promised to give, I should mention another source of notice and praise which were well calculated to produce the feeling of vain-gloriousness in the infant mind. When still a child so young as to be unacquainted with my letters, I possessed an extraordinary faculty of the boy Biddle kind for figures, and could promptly render an account of arithmetical questions, such as were put to me by the gentlemen who were my father's associates, and receive from them, in return, expressions of admiration and immense rewards, enabling me to scatter blessings round in the shape of gingerbread and sweetmeats. To be treated as a precocious phenomenon is a dangerous shoal, but as my talent left me as strangely as it had arrived, I was not long exposed to it. With the acquisition of the A, B, C, the gift of calculation suddenly departed, and from that hour to this a more unready reckoner than I have been never existed in the world. It has seemed as if all my capacity in this way had been exhausted between my birthday and its fourth anniversary ; although I have not been unequal to high and abstract propositions of sufficient interest to enchain the faculties for their solution.

Another trait, and I close this Childish chapter. Owing to a premature cold bath in the Tweed, administered whilst yet unrecovered from small-pox, I was thrown into a condition of health so delicate, that during several years it was the nearest possible issue between death and life. This led to continued indulgences, and I only got through the struggle by the help of a long-eared nurse, whose milk at morn and eve was my chief sustenance. Towards the end

of this sickly period my prolonged holidays were spent delightfully at Old Melrose, the seat of Mr. Liston, nearly related to the ambassador at Constantinople, and uncle to Robert the famous surgeon and John the famous comedian. My dear playmates, his daughters Oby and Diana, came to disastrous fates after his death ; and in Edinburgh when a student there, I met with the former under circumstances that shocked and pained me so severely that I cannot bear to think of it even now ! Sad and terrible change it was from the innocence and loveliness of Old Melrose, surrounded by scenes so pure and fair, and with all the venerable memories of antiquity to superadd intensity to the sweetest and noblest feelings of the human heart. Here, close at hand, rolled the silver Tweed, and here stood the triple Eildon Hills, the Roman station of Trimontium, Melrose Abbey, immortal in the lay of Scott, and Dryburgh Abbey, so pathetically and poetically sung by Charles Swain, where his mortal remains have their last repose.

For He whose spirit woke the dust of nations unto life—
That o'er the waste of barren earth spread flowers and fruitage rife—
Whose genius, like the sun, illumed the mighty realms of mind—
Had fled for ever from the fame, love, friendship of mankind !

CHAPTER III.

BOYHOOD.

Sweet Teviot ! on thy silver tide
The glaring balefires blaze no more ;
No longer steel-clad warriors ride
Along thy wild and willowed shore.
Where'er thou wind'st, by dale or hill,
All, all is peaceful, all is still,
As if thy waves since Time was born,
Since first they rolled upon the Tweed
Had only heard the shepherd's reed,
Nor startled at the bugle horn.

LIKE all the other boys of the place, above the poorest orders, I was educated at the parochial (not parish) school ; where the fee was ten or fourteen shillings per annum, paid in quarterly half-crowns or three-and-sixpences, and a *douceur* to the master about Candlemas ; who, according to a bad practice, declared the lad who presented him with the largest sum, captain or *dux* ; and a new foot-ball and roistering holiday was sure to follow the openly corrupt election and purchased dignity. Yet when I have in later times, been called upon to form opinions upon the complex and disputed systems proposed to be adopted for national education, I have been thrown back to reflection on the simple and genial practice of my younger days, although a little disfigured by the custom alluded to. The teacher, chosen by a constituency of the clergy and heritors or owners of pro-

perty, was endowed with a very moderate stipend, and mainly depended for support on the character of his school and the consequent number of his pupils. There was no distinction in ranks or religious persuasions. The children of the gentry, farmers, tradesmen, respectable mechanics, and in some cases, of hinds or farm servants, mingled cordially together ; and except such precedence as was earned by success with the head within, or prowess with the hands without, there was no boy preferred to another in this republic of letters. No one inquired if you were the son of a Presbyterian Kirk communicant, or an Episcopalian, or a Burgher, or an Anti-burgher, or a Papist, or a Quaker ; or what your parents believed and taught at home. Sufficient for the school was the schooling thereof : reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar in the first instance and a little of higher branches in the last, including moral precept and unsectarian advice throughout, constituted the entire routine, and has sent into the social world many a learned, and worthy, and virtuous member. If there was any competition in the breasts of the elders, it was confined to that secret depository, and was not suffered to appear in contention for the influence and mastery of peculiar creeds, or the monopoly of power and authority over rival consciences of equally confined views and pertinacious assertions of being the only and right section among the many diversities of mankind.

Could not our national schools throughout the length and breadth of the land, be framed, with a few slight and needful modifications, on a model of this description of Scottish parochial tuition ?

Still weakly in constitution, with satchel on my back and shining morning face, I was often a late and unwilling attendant at early matin hours ; but once in school, a diligent and ambitious learner : and in the out-door

exercises made amends by activity, liveliness and "pluck," for the want of athletic strength; so that altogether I managed to get on very successfully, and if not at the head of my class, was never far from it. Notwithstanding, all this while the petting and indulgences of my dear "Mammy Nan" were persevered in with increasing fondness. To the end of her life I was the darling of her thoughts and prayers, and if a youthful folly grieved her unsophisticated nature, oh, how tender was the reproof, how beaming the hope that no indiscretion would ever cause her sorrow again.

After a reasonable time in the English division under Mr. White, whose attainments were sorely tried when I came to puzzle him for explanations of the *cui bono* of Euclid, I was duly promoted to the upper Latin school, then presided over by Mr. Taylor, a very amiable and accomplished man, who soon after went to Musselburgh, and established a large and celebrated academy, to which my eldest brother, John, was sent, and there finished his education.

Mr. Taylor was succeeded by Mr. Dymock, at first found by comparison to be rough and austere, but who speedily acquired a gentler manner; and turned out an able teacher. Nearly all I got of Latin and Greek in half-a-dozen years, I got from him, and had the good fortune to make myself a favourite pupil. In later years, having left Kelso, he removed to Glasgow, where he distinguished himself as the able editor of many educational and classical works; some of which it fell to my lot to review in the *Literary Gazette*, which led to a correspondence exceedingly gratifying to us both, though I had the effrontery to criticise my old master. I overcame the Latin language by drudgery; the Greek by love of its soft and sonorous structure. Yet Horace, in the foremost order, and Livy and Pliny were

well liked : Ovid and Theocritus hardly less for their poetic mellifluence ; but Cicero was hated ; Virgil, Lucian, only coldly tolerated ; Homer not much admired, Anacreon delightful (especially after I discovered that his opening poem could be sung to the tune of Maggy Lauder), and Pindar and Hesiod detested as if they had been Nero and Herod. I was fond of mathematics, but owing to the reason above stated, the want of an instructor to inform me of the whys and wherefores, made very little progress in that important branch of science.

But the hinge that turned my life towards literary pursuits was owing to an accidental circumstance which occurred just as I was leaving school, planted new tastes in me, and shaped the current of my future in the course which it has followed. Dr. Rutherford, the author of the *View of Ancient History*, retired from the toils of an extensive boarding-school at Uxbridge, and settled at Maxwellheugh, as the assistant to the Rev. Mr. Lundie, then the minister of the Established Kirk, and father of Mr. Robert Lundie, his much esteemed successor in that charge. The learned, good-humoured and facetious Doctor was accompanied by a very accomplished lady and her beautiful daughter by a former marriage, Miss Hermione Parker (said to be nearly related to the celebrated mutineer of the *Nore*, and afterwards the wife and widow of Mr. John Ballantyne) ; and brought with him a pupil about my age, Edward Gordon, who had been entrusted to his charge from India and could not be otherwise cared for when the Uxbridge seminary was broken up. For the sake of companionship and emulation, it was my fortune to be chosen as the fellow-student of this gentle and intelligent youth ; and I ascribe every advantage I could acquire, beyond a mere school education, to the superior course of cultivation by which mind and thought

were evoked, instead of parrot note and cuckoo repetition. I may farther without vanity add, that I was selected on account of the talent I had displayed at school, where I generally carried off the prizes, and was rarely passed in particular studies by the foremost of my schoolfellows. To this sort of flattery and preference (followed as will afterwards appear by similar misleading appliances at important periods in my life) I attribute much of my character. In short, I repeat, I was a spoilt child, as will appear in the sequel with everybody, till I came to man's mature estate. I was spoilt, as related, in infancy and boyhood ; I was spoilt by the kindest of merchants with whom I spent my debut years in London (Messrs. Samuel Turners', father and sons, City Chambers) ; I was spoilt by an uncle resident in town, Mr. Stuart, Surgeon, R.N., who supplied my purse far too liberally ; and I was more than spoilt by Mr. Cornelius Elliot and his family, under whose auspices I studied law and pleasure for about three years in Edinburgh at the dangerous epoch of twenty to twenty-three years of age.

Having the legal profession anticipated for me, my leisure hours were occupied with scribbling in the office of Mr. James Hume, a writer (as attorneys or solicitors in Scotland are called) and distributor of stamps for Berwickshire. He was a very smart and clever man, said quaint and good things, had a charming wife, and entertained a good deal of good company, chiefly his clients, among whom was Mr. Haig of the ancient Border family of Bemerside, and other country gentlemen. To this society I was domestically welcomed ; so that this part of my upbringing, did not counteract, but rather harmonised with my preceding treatment. At Dr. Rutherford's there was great intelligence and refinement of manners which, at that date, before steam and railroads led to so rapid and general intercourse

among all ranks of people, contrasted more than could now be credited with the best provincial gentility of Scotland ; and at Mr. Hume's, the latter was seen enjoying all the jollity and humour of Scotch hospitality. The difference was greater than younger readers of the present generation could readily imagine. The wonderful progress of the last half-century has indeed wrought wonderful changes in every phase of society. Both my friends were jocular and entertaining characters. The worthy Doctor told the most amusing anecdotes and stories ; and among Mr. Hume's quaintnesses was the use of an odd jumble of Latin and English : as for instance his denominating Mr. White, the Treasurer of the Bank, Mr. Albus de Ripa ; whilst "*Diabolus curat*" stood for Devil-may-care, "*All meus oculus et beati Martini*" for All my eye and Betty Martin, and so forth ; interlarding his otherwise piquant conversation with such singular latinities as rarely failed to excite a hearty laugh.

Respecting the Laird of Bemerside, whom I have mentioned, I may also record the particulars of a curious superstition. Among the prophetic verses of the famous Thomas the Rhymer, of Ercildoune, now Earlstoun, there occurred the couplet :—

Whate'er befa', whate'er betide,
Haig will be Haig of Bemersyde!

But the mother of this owner of the name and title tested the prediction by a trial, which had almost deprived the Rhymer of the undoubting and universal faith hitherto attached to his oracles ; for she gave birth to no fewer than twelve daughters, and then waited some time before she would permit the prophecy to be fulfilled, by giving to the world her thirteenth and last child, a son, to exalt and confirm the miraculous powers of the Wizard Thomas, at a higher pitch than ever.

Resuming my personal narrative at the memorable date of 1800, when there was such a controversy whether the century had begun or not, an intimacy was commenced, from which I have derived much happiness, and the retrospect of which, with its multiform results, spread over the rest of my life. David, William and Frederick, the eldest three sons of Mr. David Pollock, His Majesty's saddler, and a native, I believe, of Berwick-on-Tweed, happened to take an autumnal excursion to the land of their forefathers, and in consequence of some distant co-lateral relationship by marriage, became our guests for a while, and the companions of my elder brother Gilbert, myself, and my younger brother George, all about the same age ; David Pollock, being the eldest, and Frederick Pollock and George Jerdan the youngest of the party, in a range of about five years.

The London youths enjoyed for a short week or ten days the novelties and charms of the delightful pastoral country, and its ancient ruins and historical sites, with enthusiastic zest, and giving them a pedestrian convoy through a wild district for nearly twenty miles, we bade them farewell with much regret, full of admiration of their superior intelligence, and, to us, extraordinary acquaintance with the doings of the far-off great world. For, sooth to say, at that era, a lad of sixteen or eighteen, educated in the country, knew less of other life, than a smart English child brought up in the capital, or large schools in populous places, of only eight or ten years old.

We thought our new friends prodigies ; and their after career has proved that we were not much mistaken.

My personal attachment was principally rivetted to Frederick, above a year younger than myself, but with all the fruits of Saint Paul's School education flourishing in a soil of genial fertility. His attainments and his talents

made a deep impression on me ; and for the first time, perhaps, I weighed myself in the balance, somewhat to my discomfiture and humiliation. But added to this, there existed between us (and I venture to state it as a psychological fact, and not as setting myself up unduly on the coincidence) a strong natural affinity or sympathy, which caused us to agree in most of our views and opinions, to entertain similar likes and dislikes, and to take delight in similar pursuits ; on this basis a friendship of more than half a century has been built, and during that time the feeling I have described has often been so exact and powerful upon me that I have listened and listened to what my friend was saying, and, so true were the sentiments to my own, have almost fancied that I must be the speaker, and was delivering my individual thoughts. To what extent there might be a reciprocal agreement on the other side, it is impossible for me to determine, but that it existed so far I am certain, from numerous flattering instances, although necessarily modified by superior judgment, and bounded by a higher intellect. Nevertheless there is enough to justify the exclamation of the Poet :—

Friendship, mysterious cement of the soul,
Sweetener of life.

CHAPTER IV.

LONDON.

To London once my steps I bent,
 Where trouth in no wyse should be faint.
 * * * *

Then into London I dyd me hye,
 Of all the land it beareth the pryse—
 Hot pescods one began to crye,
 Strawberry rype and cherries in the ryste.

JOHN LYDGATE. MONK.

THE effect of the intercourse stated in last chapter, was to fill my imagination with a restless longing to try my fortune in London, instead of going to Edinburgh to prosecute legal studies. My importunities were, as usual, yielded to, and on my birthday in the spring of 1801, I left home and sailed from Berwick in a smack, and, though steam was not, in due time, *i.e.*, in nine days, happily reached the Metropolis, and was landed at the wharf in Wapping. My uncle, Mr. Stuart, being in town from his ship, took charge of the stranger, and after seeing the lions, I was introduced by his acquaintance and our townsman, Mr. John Robertson, a prosperous insurance broker, to the West Indian Merchant House of Messrs. Samuel, Samuel and Charles Turner, and engaged as a clerk, at the salary of fifty pounds a year. It is curious that in Mr. Robertson's office, where for a preceding week or fortnight I was

initiated into the business ways and paths of London, Mr. John Pirie was clerk ; whilst in the saddler's shop of Mr. Pollock, at Charing Cross, Mr. Peter Laurie was foreman ; and that both came to be Lord Mayor. Pirie was a native of Dunse, but served in Kelso as shopman to Mr. Nicol, a grocer, whose daughter he afterwards married ; and Laurie was a native of Stitchell, near Kelso, and claimed a sort of distant Scotch cousinship with me, which I jocularly said I would, and was proud to, acknowledge when he was Chief Magistrate of the City. I had the pleasure of attending their inauguration dinners in the Guild Hall, and was as vain of Tweedside as if Gog and Magog had been born and bred on its pastoral banks, which seemed as likely to breed Giants as Lord Mayors.

In Messrs. Turners' counting house, City Chambers, I found a perfect sample of the quiet, contented and sedulous London clerk : a Mr. Drew, dressed in a brown Quakerish garb, and ever most punctually attentive to his day-books and ledgers, his dinner-hour and all his other duties. The Mr. Samuel Turner, Junior, at the opposite desk, took an active share in the concern ; the senior member of the firm saw parties in an inner apartment, and I filled up the establishment, seated on a high stool near Mr. Drew. Mr. Charles Turner, now the candidate for the representation of Liverpool, was, if I remember rightly, only an occasional aid in the counting-house service, in my time, which lasted, strange to say, nearly a whole year. For I was, indeed, a bungling accountant, and unprofitable help even in letter copying or other routine employment. As heretofore, the consequence was, that instead of being, as I deserved, sent about my business, my warm-hearted employers chose to overlook all my imperfections, and on finding that I was not cut out for a merchant, chose

to adopt me as a favourite, affording the promise of some distinction in some more congenial pursuit. I believe I was caught writing verses, as I had been trying to do since I was twelve years old, and bad as they must have been, they proved an excuse for having me at Mr. Turner's residence in Great Ormonde Street, where I became acquainted with the wealthy magnates of Antigua, such as the Athills, and other persons of rank and station who formed the refined and social circle of that truly enjoyable mansion. Dr. Turner, the eminent physician, was one of the family, and I think the Duke of Ancaster (though I might only have heard of his grace), and Mr. Bertie Greathead, were frequent guests. The latter found me out as I was viewing the beauties of Guy's Cliff, five-and-twenty years afterwards, and reminding me of past times, insisted on hospitable entertainment to myself and the friend who accompanied me, Mr. Orme, of Paternoster Row, when we had the farther good fortune to share it with the celebrated Dr. Parr.

But my most partial friend in the city was Mr. S. Turner, junior, who seemed absolutely to enjoy my blunders and encourage my vagaries. If I disliked the movements of reptile turtles which I had not seen before, it was rare fun ; and if I spoilt a cask of madeira by ignorantly breaking several dozen of whole eggs into it to fine it, the laugh against me appeared to make amends for the loss, or deterioration of the wine. How kindly all these things were remembered, was shown in a way which afforded me intense gratification. When the British Association visited Dublin, Sir John Tobin liberally placed a steamer at the disposal of members who went by Liverpool, to convey them to their destination. It was altogether a memorable voyage, and one not to be forgotten by the joyous passengers.

Captain Denham commanded the vessel, and Mr. Turner acted as the *locum tenens* of its owner. Among the "savans" were Adam Sedgwick, Colonel Dick of New Orleans, in my care, and thirty or forty gentlemen of scientific distinction. A sumptuous déjeûner was given on board, and after toasting the healths of greater importance, Mr. Turner did me the honour of proposing mine, which he prefaced with a ludicrous account of my mercantile incapacities, and then complimenting me on having (as he was pleased to think and say) attained a laudable position in my country's literature, he claimed for himself all the alleged merits of my literary career. "Praise from Sir Hubert Stanley," writes the poet, "is praise indeed," and I do not know that I ever in my life felt such entire gratitude and satisfaction, as in this public testimony of esteem which embraced the brief epoch of my early merchant trial; nor was it rendered less grateful by being well received by those to whom it was addressed.

I have mentioned that the voyage between Liverpool and Dublin was memorable, and it would look egotistical and vain-glorious, indeed, were I to verify the statement by only a tribute to Self: I will therefore add another anecdote. On board the steamer were the captain's lady, Mrs. Denham, and baby but a few weeks old. As we got towards the outer buoy, of the number with which Capt. Denham has so scientifically indicated the safe channels and dangerous shoals off this coast, from one of them we heard the ringing of a bell, which we learned was a signal; but to us it bore the semblance of ringing the people to church on this beautiful Sunday forenoon, and as it happened that the baby had not been christened, it was unanimously voted that the holy ceremony should be performed there and then, in the midst of its father's masterly improvements

for the safety of mariners in the navigation of the Mersey. With some little difficulty Mr. Sedgwick was prevailed upon to officiate, as he entertained some apprehension lest the sacred rite might not be performed in a proper manner and with all the solemnity that ought ever to attend it, and fresh water being found, he proceeded to give the new Christian his name. The discourse he pronounced on the occasion was one of the most eloquent and impressive that ever was delivered ; and the baptism, like the burial at sea, produced a sensation far more touching than could have been excited by the ablest divine on shore in the customary manner with which daily use has made us familiar. A collection of autographs was gathered from the witnesses, and having obtained the privilege of nursing the baby a little, I retired with him to the cabin, put the pen into his hand, and guided it to the youngest signature on record. He is now a fine promising fellow, and has recently, under most promising auspices, entered the Royal Navy as a midshipman ; and if the rest of his naval career be as remarkable as his launch, his country will hear much more of the feats of Admiral Denham !

From this episode I must revert to 1801, and London. As might be anticipated, my intimacy with the Pollock family was cultivated and improved, and their father's hospitable roof was all but a home to me. Their friends and acquaintances became my friends and acquaintances ; I visited with the elders as if I had been their son, and with one or more of the younger branches I passed the time spared by my clerkly occupations in the City. David was called to the bar of the Middle Temple, where his chambers, No. 5, Elm Court, were almost as much occupied by me as by their legal owner. William, who died in early manhood, was destined to be the successor in trade, and possessed his

full share of the talent of the brotherhood: great acuteness, and a nice sense of the ludicrous and satirical, were his prominent characteristics, and these he inherited from his sire; but, as in most cases where superior ability or genius are seen to run in the blood, my more eminent companions derived their higher qualities from the mother's side. She deserved to have such children. Frederick had somewhat of an escape from the holy profession, which was spoken of, lest there being two brothers pursuing the same career in the law might interfere with the prospects of each other; but fortunately wiser counsels prevailed, and the present Lord Chief Baron was committed to Cambridge. My voice, as far as it was worth aught, was strenuous for this course, and, with the presumption of youth, I always chose to consider myself as having, by earnestness of argument, contributed to this most auspicious issue, which was truly arrived at through other and more valid inducements. A younger brother still was George, who soon departed as a cadet for India; that empire, which when the true history of its wars is written, will be found to have been saved by his great military talents, his sagacity, and firmness under trials that would have paralysed almost any other commander. I write this advisedly, and from a knowledge of facts relating to the Khyber Pass, which have not yet been made known to the public. We have some ideas, indeed, of the daring responsibility of the advance, and of the surrounding difficulties and perils of the march, but we have not yet heard of an incipient mutiny in two or three regiments, suppressed by the firmness and tact of the general, a whisper of which would have turned the arms of his Sikh allies against him; and with the hordes of thousands of the hill tribes hanging on every quarter, must have led to the total destruction of the army. A position of greater peril and glory can hardly

be imagined. He ignored or *misunderstood* the directions to retreat ; he satisfied the mutineers, in separate interviews, by assurances of redress of their grievances, on which they relied (had he paraded them for the purpose all would have been lost) ; and as soon as every thing was sure, he hurried his motley and nearly disorganised force on to victory, to the salvation of terrified captives, and to the re-establishment of British supremacy over the Eastern world. This was the work of one man. The youngest of the brothers was John, who now discharges the duties of an official appointment, in a manner to show that there is no degeneracy in his case.

I have indulged in this retrospect because I take it for granted that my readers, like myself, will feel an interest in the early years of a family which has raised itself to so much distinction and honour. Three knighthoods, and the highest ranks in the legal and military professions—not without just claims to more had it been eligible for themselves—are striking examples of the best and most valuable principles of the British Constitution ; and when we look upon the elevation of such races as the Wellesleys, the Malcolms, the Napiers, and the Pollocks, we feel that the safety and grandeur of our country rest upon that solid foundation, the union and ambition of a whole people, to every member of which the way is open for all that could be desired in golden opinions, and wealth, and dignity, and immortal fame.

But I would fain draw another inference from these gratifying sights, and especially invite the attention of juvenile readers to them, as very powerful inducements to the culture of brotherly kindness and love. How often are families kept down or wrecked by the selfish apathies or quarrels of their members ; and, on the other hand, how

much are they benefitted, and how nobly do they rise when the warm affections, cherished in the home circle, teach them throughout life to love, and use their utmost efforts to help each other. Thus the fortunes of one make the fortunes of all, and humanity is graced by the holy example.

CHAPTER V.

JUVENILE COMPANIONS—THE CYPHER !

The dreams of early youth,
How beautiful they are—how full of joy !
When fancy looks like truth,
And life shows not a taint of Sin's alloy.—SWAIN.

I HAVE noticed the coincidence of two Lord Mayors having sprung out of my first acquaintance with the business premises of London, and, when I introduce my companions, it will appear that still more remarkable elevation attended the footsteps of some of them. But I may, by the-by, take the occasion for noticing how extraordinary an effect it had on me, to observe that, in this mighty capital, every man was personally and sedulously occupied with his trade or occupation, and that no man, whatever it might be, was "above his business." The same spirit is remarkable to the present day, but I do not think its operations are so obvious and universal. The merchant princes, it is true, still attend for a few hours at their offices in the city ; the shopkeepers, in the most extensive lines, bestow infinite civilities upon their customers ; and persons in mechanical trades do not keep aloof from their details. Still manners are considerably changed, and I fancy it would now be difficult to parallel that which struck me with astonishment on being measured for a London suit of clothes, to be forced

to allow the task to be performed by the master himself whom I had met travelling in the north as a gentleman (which in every sense he was), who lived in handsome style in a good house in Norfolk Street, and who, with two accomplished daughters, entertained the best company which the metropolis could supply half a century ago.

In consequence of the intimacies, or, as lads call them, friendships to which I have alluded, a small society was formed to meet at stated times, read papers on given subjects, and discuss the same *vivâ voce* thereafter. It consisted of the three Pollocks, three Wildes, John, Thomas, and Archer, two Bramahs, sons of the ingenious and celebrated mechanic, Frederick Burchell, an apprentice at Charing Cross, and brother of the proprietor of the far-famed anodyne necklace, and myself, with occasional attendances of several individuals, rather our seniors, such as Mr. Jackson, a barrister, son of one of the Commissioners of Excise, Mr. Cartwright, an able surgeon, still strong in health, and efficiently practising the healing art, whilst Jackson was advanced to be legal chief of the Excise office in Edinburgh, and died there very sincerely regretted for his amiable qualities and general intelligence. And here let me pause to offer a few words in earnest commendation of youthful associations of this kind. They are of immense utility in developing the intellectual faculties, in stimulating to instructive competition, in leading to self-improvement, and a right standard of self-value, and in worthily employing the time which is otherwise but too likely to be wasted, if not worse, in idleness and want of thought. Our literature, our statesmen, our senate, our pulpit, our bench, our bar, yea, our public, and civil, and corporate, and even our vestry meetings, afford abundant evidence of the future capacity which is derived from such exercises, and how

eminently they serve to promote the advancement of those who have been trained in their voluntary school. The gift of elocution and eloquence is, in fact, the readiest and most certain high-road to preferment, and if the mind is by the same process stored with information—

“ When house and lands are gone and spent,
This learning is most excellent.”

On the talents displayed at *our* club assemblages, in Mr. D. Pollock's chambers, it does not become me to deliver an opinion, for I was not a laggard in the race. I recently entertained the hope of recovering some of the MSS. to afford a selection for my appendix, but am afraid they are irretrievably gone, and I condole with the public on the loss ! David and Frederick Pollock, and Thomas Wilde were the most active and distinguished contributors, and when I reflect on the circumstance, and that the first died Sir David and Chief Justice of Bombay, the second is Sir Frederick and Lord Chief Baron of Her Majesty's Court of Exchequer, and the third, Lord Truro, the other day Lord High Chancellor of England, the foremost civil subject of the realm, I cannot but marvel at the fate of their fourth and their not very unequal competitor. My prospects were apparently as bright as theirs, my cleverness (not to use a vainer phrase) was only too much acknowledged, and my career has not been altogether fruitless in the service of my country and fellow-creatures. I have laboured, too, as constantly and severely, and produced effects which have had beneficial contemporary influence, and may, I trust, secure for my name a remembrance in times to come ; yet look I with my aspirations crushed, from the clouded bottom of the hill, rejoicing in and admiring, not envying, my early comrades, who having bravely climbed the

summit, they range along the height, and in happiness enjoy the brilliant region, on which, humanly speaking, warm and eternal sunshine settles.

But what is the moral lesson I would draw from these facts? Why did my friends so nobly succeed, and why did I, ultimately, so grievously fail? The reasons are not far to seek. Frederick Pollock completed his education in an English University, where the highest honours were awarded to his great abilities, and indefatigable and zealous exertions. In every branch and class he was among the foremost, and, as Senior Wrangler, was the foremost of his year, carrying off the glorious prize from many a splendid and dangerous rival. In short, he had the vision of the future distinctly before his eyes, and he devoted himself heart and soul to its realisation. He never flagged, and, after the first great College step, his even path needed no more than unflinching perseverance in the course he had so auspiciously begun. From Edinburgh I corresponded with him in his onward movement, and occasionally added my mite of research to his studious investigations, which was of some advantage to me, though it could be of very little to him, and only prove the deep interest I felt in all that concerned his progress and welfare. A pleasing anecdote may illustrate this part of my narrative, as I had it from the lips of another conspicuous pattern of high exaltation through similar merits, from a humbler walk in life—the Bishop of London. In a conversation with his lordship a few months since, at Hatton, he informed me that his personal knowledge of the Chief Baron was nearly as old as my own, for he said, “We were at college together forty-seven years ago, when Pollock read Greek with me in the forenoon every day, and I read mathematics with him every evening. This,” he added, “was good for both, but I then went to my curacy,

and he pursued his legal studies ; and so we did not meet again together for some time."

I now turn to Thomas Wilde, who had to struggle against infinitely greater difficulties than his school-fellow of Saint Paul's. In the first place his birth was not so respectable, in the second he had an impediment in his speech, and in the third he had no college connexions or reputation to lift him forward. But he had a strong and indomitable will, and a natural energy that could not be repulsed — unswerving firmness and untiring application were his marked characteristics : he would give up nothing he had determined upon ; he would yield to no opposition ; and his abilities were already of a very masculine order. Accordingly when he entered the law as an attorney he was as sure of success as Pollock was at the bar, and thus they speedily outstripped and left me far in the distance.

For why ? I unsteadily forsook the choice of a profession, and, within a few years, found myself leaning for life on the fragile crutch of literature for my support. And here again would I earnestly advise every enthusiastic thinker, every fair scholar, every ambitious author, every inspired poet, without independent fortune, to fortify themselves also with a something more worldly to do. A living in the Church is not uncongenial with the pursuits of the thinker and scholar, the practice of medicine is not inconsistent with the labours of the author, and the chinking of fees in the law is almost in tuning with the harmony of the poet's verse. Let no man be bred to literature alone, for, as has been far less truly said of another occupation, it will not be bread to him. Fallacious hopes, bitter disappointments, uncertain rewards, vile impositions, and censure and slander from the oppressors are their lot, as sure as ever they put pen to paper for publication, or risk their peace of mind

on the black, black sea of printer's ink. With a fortune to sustain, or a profession to stand by, it may still be bad enough ; but without one or the other it is as foolish as alchemy, as desperate as suicide.

Having, however, brought prominent persons into my canvas, I must leave off descanting on incidental topics, and endeavour to entertain and interest readers with some traits and descriptions belonging to the earlier years of my pre-eminent London associates. The impressions of slight affairs are vivid still, and one matter is of sufficient importance to require a marked place in any autobiography of mine. Let me preface the next anecdotal chapter by observing that we lived much together, partook of the same amusements, joined in the same inquiries for our evening exhibitions, and indulged generally in the same moderate symposia after the conflict was over, and a keen encounter of our wits, satirical remark, humorous quizzing, and jocular caricature succeeded to the really grave and instructive exercises of the well-spent hours. It was upon one of these occasions that the event alluded to occurred, with the curious particulars of which I am about to make my readers acquainted. The discussion run upon the subject of secret cyphers, which hardly ever having heard of before, I asserted must be very easily invented, and maintained that I could myself frame a system which nobody on earth could decypher and read. This piece of provincial impertinence was punished by the not unusual test of a wager, in this instance with T. Wilde, a dinner to the little party, that I could accomplish no such feat. I fancied it so easy and was so sure of winning, by some nonsensical transposition of the alphabet, that I was thunder-struck when the "Cyclopædia" was handed from the library shelf, and I was invited to peruse the many schemes which

had been devised for this purpose, and the means by which the most complicated and mysterious of them had been unravelled, and made as patent as a round text hand. I felt the ninnyship of my ignorance and presumption, and when I retired to rest was on no very pleasant terms with myself, for I had looked very like what I had no chance of inventing—a Cypher.

The old axiom, however, proclaims it to be a wise thing to consult your pillow on weighty occasions, and whether it proceeded from my pillow or myself, between sleeping and waking, I cannot tell; but I arose in the morning with a secret cypher concocted in my brain, which I knew it to be impossible for any human being to make out. It was a simple thought; but there could be no mistake about it. Mr. Jackson called in to congratulate me, ironically, on my good luck in making so enviable a bet, and ask when and where we were to dine. To him I communicated my Secret, and at once found a proselyte and ally. He pointed out the vast importance of the matter, and spoke of the absurdity of wasting it upon a frivolous difference of opinion. It ought to be laid before the Government, and I cannot tell how immense a reward I was to reap for my wonderful discovery! No castle in the air was ever more stupendous and gorgeous than mine. Well, the first thing to do was to consult with my astute opponent, Wilde, and he also gave in his adherence *instantly*. Thus was the affair set in a proper light and put into a likely train; and I do not think a plum would have purchased my expectations from me.

Yet did they dissolve in thin air as visionary as the dream from which they were hatched, and

“ Like the baseless fabric of a vision
Left not a wrack behind.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE CYPHER CONTINUED.

Ex nihilo, nihil fit.

Whole rows of cyphers just for nothing stand,
An unit is worth millions of the band.

WILDE and I were now all agog for an audience of the Prime Minister, to put him in possession of the good fortune which had befallen his government, and ourselves in the way of wealth and promotion. My county member, Sir George Douglas, gave letters of introduction, and we had the honour of an interview with Mr. Sarjeant, the private secretary of Lord Sidmouth. To him we candidly explained the mode according to which we held the decyphering of secret despatches to be impossible, and were dismissed from a polite reception with an appointment for another day, when the question should be more fully treated. In about a week we attended and again saw the secretary, who, at first, did not seem to recollect anything about us or our momentous affair; but on having his obliviousness refreshed, did "remember the *secret cypher of which he had a copy in his drawer*," waving his hand towards that receptacle of our treasure, or its counterfeit resemblance. Other correspondence and conferences took place, when, from severe illness, my time came to depart for Scotland,

and I left my partner in negotiation with the minister ; the result of which I never heard ! It may appear strange that, after my removal, I did not pay greater attention to this so lately absorbing speculation ; but fever had so far erased it from my brain, and engaging in a novel course, and not hearing anything of it, my volatile genius concluded that it had failed, and for years a thought of it hardly ever crossed my mind, even as a passing shadow or reminiscence. It was, however, singularly restored by an accidental circumstance which happened in 1813, or 1814, when I was editor of the " Sun " newspaper, and in constant and familiar communication with the Treasury and Secretary of State's departments. One day I went into Mr. Under Secretary Rolleston's room in the Foreign Office, Downing Street ; and finding that he had gone out for a few minutes, casually seated myself by the table at which he had been writing. My eye was immediately caught by the hieroglyphics and figures with which I saw his paper overspread, and I went near to examine the scroll. Mr. Rolleston soon returned, and observing me thus employed, told me, with a laugh, that I was welcome to detect the secrets of that despatch, and make what use of them I liked. I confessed that although I certainly could not read it, because I had not the key, yet I was perfectly acquainted with the mode of its construction, and was indeed the inventor of the design. This surprised him much, and he acknowledged that the principle and method I described were truly the elements of his composition, and in use wherever secrecy was required in the Foreign Office. I have thus reason to believe that my cypher has been, and is still, the lock up of diplomatic correspondence, which none except the party addressed can understand, and is a sealed book to all the world beside.

But the striking curiosity of the business is, that the first

personal acquaintance of the future Lord Chancellor of England with any official personage connected with the government should have arisen out of a sportive juvenile bet, and the suggestion of the writer of this biography. How far it was, if ever farther cultivated, I have no means of knowing, but it was an introduction to a superior class, and might have been turned to advantage by a young and able man entering upon the busy scene of professional life. I have noticed that he had much greater difficulties to contend against than his schoolfellow, F. Pollock ; because, in the first place, his father did not move in so respectable a circle ; in the second place he had not the advantage of a University education ; in the third place he began with a lower branch of legal practice ; and in the last place he was affected by an impediment in his speech. Wilde, senior, was an attorney in a limited sphere, with a still inferior partner, and resided in one of the small houses in Warwick Square, Newgate Market, and had a rural retreat in one still smaller at Holloway, at the foot of Highgate Hill. There was one window in the parlour and two on the first floor, which by courtesy we will call the drawing-room. Yet thither have the Lord Chancellor Truro, the Lord Chief Baron and I been well pleased to repair for recreation on a summer Sunday, and regale ourselves on the be-knighted joint of prime roast beef, which was a *Sir* long, long before any of those who ate of it could dream that similar and greater honours awaited their onward triumph in the grand competition of English society. From among the people to the judge's ermine and the coronet of the peer is a glorious stride. Who could have imagined it possible at the humble little cottage at Holloway ! But talent, persistence, and energy are engines to accomplish any and every thing in this land of equal freedom, in which the course is clear and

open to the high and low, and the goal is within the reach of all who are gifted with superior powers for the winning of the race.

Of Wilde's energy there were many striking proofs even in his younger days ; and the character bore him through every obstacle. His dogged resolution to overcome the impediment in his speech, and his success in doing so, afforded a remarkable instance of this quality. He would stand silent till he had composed the organs of sound for the distinct articulation of what he desired to say, and by the skilful and constant application of this inviolable resolution, he, by his own unaided and untaught efforts, conquered the annoying affection. I remember his taking me to some dark office in the Inner Temple Lane, to show me Bloomfield, the author of "The Farmer's Boy," who, through the interest of Capel Lofft, had been appointed to a situation for some distribution of law forms administered there. The excitement caused a fit of stammering to come on, and there he stood, dumb as a statue for several minutes, till he had forced his organisation, by the effort of will over physical defect, to perform the duty he demanded, and give utterance to well delivered and well rounded periods. Such a self cure is extremely rare, and in this case was nearly perfect ; for the only remains that ever appeared in after years was a slight occasional and hardly observable hesitation when pleading at the bar.

It was in one of these pleadings, only a few years ago, when defending a client alleged to be rather imbecile because he scribbled doggrel rhymes, Serjeant Wilde replied that the writing of doggrel was no proof of weakness of intellect, for he could quote an old friend of his who enjoyed a just celebrity in the literary world, and yet had addressed a post letter to another friend with this superscription :—

" This is for David Pollock, 'squire ;
In Elm Court, Temple, pray inquire
On the ground-floor, and look no higher
To catch him.
He'll pay you twopence for this letter,
He never did so for a better ;
But if he should remain your debtor,
Do watch him."

This well-remembered trick of youthful fun (how curiously are such trifles impressed upon us from that age to old, whilst multitudes of important things in the between are utterly forgotten !) raised the laugh ever so ready in Parliament and the Courts of law, and, it is to be presumed, was so apposite that it must have carried the cause !

It is grateful to look back on the critical epoch to which the last two chapters have referred ; and to feel that they can well bear the reflection of riper years. Most of the party mentioned were recently released from immediate control, and, as it may be said, freely bracing themselves to enter upon the grand arena of self-dependent and public struggle. In the midst of exuberant animal spirits and the natural appetite for juvenile enjoyment, there was no debasing vice, nor low habit, nor unworthy inclination, nor desire for excess among us. The readings and discussions, a certain unison of two and three in studies and pursuits, and general intercourse with only the well-informed and better orders of society, were all safety-valves amid the temptations and opportunities of London. How harmless were our most extravagant frolics, may be gathered from my remembrance of one of the most piquant and entertaining of them, which may also serve as a sketch of bygone customs, when Charlies were and Police were not ; and show what potent, grave, and reverend seniors might witness and promote in the days of their youth, on the plea of observing the manners and customs of the people. On breaking up

from a sederunt in Elm Court at a much later hour than usual one night, it so happened that my companion and myself saw a poor creature grossly maltreated in the street by Temple Bar. We interfered in vain to prevent a continuance of the injury, and finding our arguments less persuasive than some we had employed in the previous evening's debate, we called the watch to seize the offender. Having seen the outrage, we were requested to step into the watch-house, at the entrance-gate of the new church in the Strand as we passed, and state the case to the dignitary of the locale, the worshipful constable of the night, an officer elected from among the *élite* of the parish. On entering we discovered a laughable Dogberry and Verges scene, and listened for a while, till our turn came, to proceedings almost as amusing as Shakspeare himself could have represented. The whim, I suppose, was infectious, for on being invited by the Rhadamanthus to state the particulars of the assault, my friend began to address him in a set speech. He insisted on the sanctity which ought to shield a woman's person, on the duty of every man to protect her from harm, and on the brutality of the wretch who could dare to violate every principle of humanity by insulting female weakness, and abusing female trust. "You, Mr. Constable," he exclaimed, "must be too well versed in the classics not to know what Homer has so nobly put into the mouth of his gallant hero—

Νεστορα δ' οὐκ ἔλαθεν λαχὴν, πίνοντά περ ἔμπης,
 Ἄλλ' Ἀσκληπιάδην ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα·
 Φράζεο, δῖε Μαχῶον, ὅπως ἔσται τάδε ἔργα·
 Μείζων δὴ παρὰ νηυσὶ βοή θαλερῶν αἰζηῶν.
 Ἄλλὰ σὺ μὲν νῦν πῖνε καθήμενος αἶθροπα οἶνον,
 Εἰσόκε θερμὰ λουτρὰ εὐπλόκαμος Ἑκαμήδη
 Θερμήνῃ, καὶ λούσῃ ἀπὸ βρότον αἱματόεντα.
 Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἔλθὼν τάχα εἰσομαι ἐς περιώπην.

Ὡς εἰπὼν, σάκος εἴλε τετυγμένον υἱὸς ἔηος,
 Κείμενον ἐν κλισίῃ, Θρασυμήδεος ἱπποδάμοιο,
 Χαλκῷ παμφαῖνον· ὃ δ' ἔχ' ἀσπίδα πατρὸς ἐοῖο.
 Ἔλτετο δ' ἄλκιμον ἔγχος ἀκαχμένον ὀξείῃ χαλκῷ.
 Στῆ δ' ἔχτοδς κλισίης, τάχα δ' εἰσίδεν ἔργον αἰεὶς,
 Τοὺς μὲν ὀρινομένους, τοὺς δὲ κλονέοντας ὀπισθε
 Τρῶας ὑπερθύμους· ἐρέριπτο δὲ τεῖχος Ἀχαιῶν.
 Ὡς δ' ὅτε πορφύρῃ πέλαγος μέγα κύματι κωφῷ,
 Ὀσσομένον λιγέων ἀνέμων λαίψηρὰ κέλευθα
 Αὔτως, οὐδ' ἄρα τε προκυλινδεται οὐδετέρωσε,
 Πρὶν τινα κεκριμένον καταβήμεναι ἐκ Διὸς οὖρον.
 Ὡς ὁ γέρων ὤρμαινε, θαΐζόμενος κατὰ θυμὸν
 Διχθάδι· ἥ μὲθ' ὁμιλον ἴοι Δαναῶν ταχυπάλων,
 Ἡὲ μετ' Ἀτρεΐδην Ἀγαμέμνονα, ποιμένα λαῶν.
 Ὡδε δὲ οἱ φρονέοντι δοῦσαστο κέρδιον εἶναι,
 Βῆναι ἐπ' Ἀτρεΐδην· οἱ δ' ἀλλήλους ἐνέριζον,
 Μαρνόμενοι· λάκε δὲ σφι περὶ χροῦ χαλκὸς ἀτειρῆς
 Νυσσομένων ξίφεσιν τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν ἀμφιγύοισι.

The bewildered constable looked, in his amazement and distress, towards the place where I was seated at the table, and, having pulled the night book of charges to me, was proceeding to fill it with entries of all sorts of transgressions, and their results in acquittals or punishments. The detection of this unparalleled transaction created great dismay, and made confusion worse confounded. The constable declared that he did not understand Homer at all, and called me from my mischievous employment to tell him plainly what had taken place. I, of course, followed in the track of my leader, and addressed the court in a grandiloquent style, lamenting the degeneracy of the age when such things could happen, and dwelling on the disgrace to the city of London or Westminster (dependent on which side of Temple Bar the main offence was committed), should the culprit escape retribution. I regretted that the constable was not sufficiently conversant with the Iliad to comprehend the masterly and touching appeal quoted from the illustrious Grecian bard ; but as he must be familiar with what Virgil

had expressed under similar circumstances (it would have been hard to find out where the similarity lay), I would merely repeat the Roman sentiments on the occasion :

Conticuère omnes, intentique ora tenebant.
 Indè toro pater Æneas sic orsus ab alto :
 Infandum, regina, jubes renovare dolorem ;
 Trojanas ut opes, et lamentabile regnum
 Eruerint Danaï ; quæque ipse miserrima vidi,
 Et quorum pars magna fui. Quis talia fando
 Myrmidonum, Dolopumve, aut duri miles Ulyssis
 Temperet à lachrymis ? et jam nox humida cœlo
 Præcipitat, suadentque cadentia sidera somnos.
 Sed si tantus amor casus cognoscere nostros,
 Et breviter Trojæ supremum audire laborem :
 (Quamquam animus meminisse horret, luctuque refugit)
 Incipiam. Fracti bello, fatisque repulsi
 Ductores Danaûm, tot jam labentibus annis,
 Instar montis equum, divinâ Palladis arte
 Ædificant, sectæque intexunt abjete costas.
 Votum pro reditu simulant : ea fama vagatur.
 Hûc delecta virûm sortiti corpora furtim
 Includunt cæco lateri ; penitusque cavernas
 Ingentes, utrumque armato milite compleunt.
 Est in conspectu Tenedos, * * *

The patience of Job could have stood no more, and it was a relief to all concerned or present, when the good-humoured constable, evidently too dull or too bemused with beer for a joke, in a deprecatory tone interrupted me to beg that I would say no more. It was quite unnecessary, he was perfectly satisfied, and as we had witnessed the offence, he wished to be informed what we thought should be the nature and extent of the punishment. We forthwith intimated an opinion that the culprit, who had been sobered and frightened by the orations, ought to beg the lady's pardon and disburse five shillings for the watchmen to drink ; a sentence, I rejoice to add, so evidently tempering politeness and justice with generosity and mercy that it gave universal satisfaction, and we departed amid the plaudits and bows of the audience. So innocuous and extempore a freak can

derogate from no character, however grave and high, and I may as well make an end on't. The exit from the watchhouse recompensed us for the time so idly spent, by displaying the sun emergent from the horizon, and lighting the heavens with all the rich tints and lustre of a glorious summer morn. To think of bed was out of the question ; but at the bottom of one of the streets from the Strand to the river, we caught sight of a west country barge, slowly floating up with the tide towards Richmond. The vision was decisive; we were speedily on board and enjoyed a voyage as delicious as fancy could picture. Nothing disturbed the stillness of the hour and placid stream ; the banks were lovely in the glow of light ; the song birds were carolling sweetly from bush and bough ; all nature was fresh and fair, and the soul attuned itself to the harmonies on every side. The turmoils, and the follies, and the griefs, and the stains, and the saddened reflections of the watchhouse, if not forgotten, were only thought of to be contrasted with the calm and repose, the inexpressible beauty and incitement to virtuous feeling and action, which breathed throughout the bountiful dispensations of Providence. We could but marvel at the contemptible experience of the midnight town, and acknowledge the divinity that stirred up all the finer elements of the inanimate and animate world, the transition to which only occupied the magic of a minute.

Ablution and a Richmond breakfast concluded the adventure, of which I hope no ill-natured critic will say, that as it had slept for half a century, and not being a Sleeping Beauty, it would have been as advisable to leave it to its slumbers.

CHAPTER VII.

EDINBURGH.

Edina, Scotland's darling seat !

* * * *

Thy sons, Edina, social, kind,
With open arms the stranger hail.

* * * *

Thy daughters bright thy walks adorn !

Gay as the gilded summer sky,
Sweet as the dewy milk-white thorn,
Dear as the raptured smile of joy.—BURNS.

FROM being so much in the chambers of Mr. David Pollock, my intimacy was closer with him, as regards time, than with any of his brothers. We were very much together, and I was sincerely attached to him, as he was, I believe, to me, for his son assures me that my name was one of the last upon his tongue at his death in Bombay. In the spring of 1802 we paid a visit to Mr. Burchell, near Amersham. On returning, after a few days' pleasure and enjoyment, I was suddenly seized, on our way home, with a dangerous brain fever. I shook as if in a violent fit of ague, and my terrified friend, having wrapt me in all obtainable great coats and coverings, literally laid me down and sat upon me for warmth. I was soon under the care of my uncle, and removed to a lodging in Lower Sloane Street, where there was more air and room to breathe than in the heart of the City, where I had pitched my tent for proximity to the counting-house in

Tokenhouse-Yard. I lay long in the conflict between life and death, too delirious to be aware of my situation, and even in my convalescence the most ingenious and credible romancer that ever tested the belief of medical attendants. Several of my dream stories were so feasible and congruous, that my uncle absolutely put faith in their reality ; and it was, indeed, some time before I could entirely disabuse myself of the same opinion. Ultimately my life was saved ; an event for which I owe a deep debt of gratitude to no less eminent a physician than Dr. Harness, who although holding the distinguished position of President of the Sick and Hurt Board, sedulously attended me as a friend, and by his skill and judgment raised me from the edge of the grave. When I was able to be removed, my generous uncle conveyed me to the healing influence of my native air, and delivered over his charge to my mother, with the ironical character of a young gentleman who had lived in an exceedingly handsome manner upon a salary of fifty pounds a year. To do him justice, he had promoted and supplied the extra expenditure, but was at this juncture somewhat disappointed at bringing home a poor emaciated invalid, instead of the prodigy he expected me to have been ! A tedious period of lassitude and dejection ensued ; and my constant wish was to occupy an oval spot of flower-covered mould, surrounded by green box, on a part of the garden which sloped towards the beauteous Tweed, and lay open to the golden beams of the rising sun. During this interval I learnt that time was worth nothing ; and that it was only our own doings which filled it up and made it valuable, or the reverse. Ever since, when I have had occasion to mourn over lost or mis-spent hours, I have not ventured to blame Old Greybeard, but taken the shame, where it was due,—to myself. But weeks wore away, and health

began to impart the vigour of former days to the body, and a corresponding elasticity to the mind. Richard was almost himself again, but views were changed, and the study of law in Edinburgh determined upon. The Justinian and Feudal codes were affirmed to be the broad bases of later legislation, and as they were far better taught in Edinburgh than anywhere else, I was once more to set up for a Prodigy, and lay the illustrious foundations there.

I was accordingly placed with Mr. Cornelius Elliott, Writer to the Signet, an aged gentleman, and old friend of some of my progenitors or relatives, of whom I knew nothing. But it induced him to receive me in the kindest manner, and commence another course of spoiling, far more perilous at my age, then, and under all existing circumstances, than any which had previously tried me in the moral crucible, and failed, as yet, to make me a fool or a profligate. My London sojourn had sharpened my wits a little, into a sort of smartness, and created a difference between me and my fellows who had never quitted their mothers' apron-strings; and small as this distinction was, it helped largely to the favouritism with which I was treated. Mr. Elliott resided at No. 95, Queen Street, New Town, and Lord Moira, then Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Scotland, at No. 94. His Staff were a lively and gallant set: Lord Raneliffe, Tom Sheridan, Ensign Browne, and I think, Dalrymple, afterwards Earl of Stair, were of the number; and the martinettish General had sometimes enough ado to keep his Aides under military discipline. The contretemps were frequently amusing, and an account of some of them may serve, by-and-by, to diversify the desultory, characteristic and anecdotic portion of my task.

In the meantime I have to pursue my personal memoir. In a suitable lodging in Thistle Street I lived nearly opposite

my estimable relations, Mrs. Hamilton, her son Robert (the indefatigable and greatly esteemed directing agent of the Shipping Company, resident at Granton,) and two daughters, one of whom we had the unhappiness to bury whilst I remained in Edinburgh, and the other, the present Mrs. Irving, wife of the junior representative of the ancient family of Drum. With them I passed the most rational and most gratifying of the leisure hours I could contrive to snatch from my other engagements of business or pleasure. I never liked the law, and certainly I was not drugged with it. The occasional copying of deeds and other papers, the amusement of taking seizins (the symbolic ceremonies of which quite redeemed the dryness of the verbose recitals), a rare attendance at the Court of Session, and other routine, were all I ever heard or learnt of Justinian and his code, or the venerable Feudal systems of the middle ages. My lesson might run thus :—*Master*. “Willy, my dear, you must be early with me the morn, for I have a contract to dictate to you of great consequence.” *Willy*. “At what hour, sir?” *Master*. “It must na’ be later than eight o’clock, and you’ll find me up and all ready for you.” Probably I might be tolerably punctual? The table and desk were set, the paper or parchment was spread, I took my seat, and the dictator, walking about the room, proceeded to deliver the oracles which I committed to the record, repeating every last word of a sentence to show that I was ready to go on again. This hard work might last for nearly or even quite an hour, when my easy and ever good-humoured friend, either found out that we must be tired or that it was time to go to breakfast; and at breakfast was always a bevy of beauty enough to drive all law, or gospel either, out of the head of a student, if such there could be, thrice as old as I was. The superb future

Lady Elphinstone, then Lady Carmichael, was a daughter of Mr. Elliott ; and another daughter, Margaret, and cousins Charlotte, &c., and other companions often staying with them, possessed female attractions which could hardly be surpassed in the British empire. They were also frank and unceremonious, and delightful were the forenoons of those days when my early morning toils brought me the privilege of mingling, for the sake of recreation, with such company. To confess the truth, Mr. Elliott's dictations were not so rapid as speedily to exhaust a prolix deed, and I did not exert myself to write so very fast as would expedite the transaction, without due time for deliberation and correctness ; and so, between us, it never could be said that the business was spoilt by being hurried, or that we set our ungrateful faces against the law's delay.

Had it not been for such co-lateral inducements, I should never have stuck even nominally to this profession as I did. As it was, I did not attend the classes to receive the necessary instruction, but went as an amateur, pretty regularly, to those of medicine and chemistry, for which sciences I had a strong natural predilection ; but, indeed, it was, altogether, too much of play or pleasure, and too little of work or study. I almost realised a wish I had entertained in my early school days, on seeing a fountain : " Oh, happy fountain," I whispered to myself, " would I were like you, and had nothing to do but to play ! "

Perhaps no place in Britain has changed so essentially, within the present century, as the Scottish capital. At the time I am writing of, it was in customs, manners, and every element of society, from top to bottom, nearly as different from London, as London was from Pekin. From senators of the College of Justice* to caddies (a sort of ticket-porters,

* See Appendix E.

or running footmen, generally highlanders,) in the streets, there was a strange spice of eccentricity which led to odd habits and acts, as the rule and not the exception throughout the community. Billiards and luncheons, dinners and hard drinking, tavern suppers and oyster fêtes, and hearing the chimes at midnight after the fashion of which Justice Shallow boasts, formed the general living panorama of the place. My disposition vacillated between thoughtfulness and thoughtlessness: I was either absorbed in the one or misled by the other. In London, the amusements and recreations had still left me under the protection of the graver and better mood; but in Edinburgh, the gaieties and seductions, ever tempting the other way, were too potent for me to resist. Thus, though it was impossible not to acquire a good deal of intelligence from my social intercourse, during the period I passed there, I never could look back upon the precious time when so much might have been done, without deep and vain regrets that it had been so irretrievably wasted and mis-spent.

Being initiated into free-masonry in the Ancient Lodge of the Canongate Kilwinning,—having a pistol bullet fired at me near Mushat's Crag, in consequence of a silly quarrel with a fiery West Indian student,—and serving in the splendid corps, the 1st Regiment of Edinburgh Volunteers, commanded by Charles Hope, were the leading events left on my memory during this period, susceptible, if worthy, of public record in my personal journal.

And here allow me to remark, or rather to repeat the statement with which I set out,—that I find it irksome to deal so largely in Self-notice; but consistently with my design, I cannot help My-Self, and can only promise relief when I come to broader correspondence with men and things, and a later date whereunto matters more interesting

to the present generation belong. Hitherto, I could but exhibit sketches of the past ; and scenes in which, with all my desire to do so, the part of Hamlet could not be omitted. Be this my apology for yet a little longer trespass.

My Masonic career, which I conscientiously except from the category of ill-employed time, brought me into more familiar acquaintance with Lord Raneliffe, Tom Sheridan (as he was called then, and, I believe, to the day of his death), and other Aides, who were my contemporaneous brethren, though initiated in another Lodge, of which a well-known and popular humourist, Joseph Gillon, W.S., happened to be master. His rich jokes and racy conversation formed a lode-star to the congenial temperament of Sheridan, who, even in his younger days, displayed no small share of his father's wit and brilliancy. These attractions, and the habits of the gude Auld Town, led to occasional tavern-resorts, after the sober refectons of the Lodges—which were restricted to a slice of bread and cheese and a single glass to drink (not, as in London, rounded off by plenteous banquets)—and convivial enjoyments were carried on with a degree of spirit and animation that could hardly be surpassed. The high jinks of a preceding era were certainly improved upon; for we were not so boisterous, and I should think, from the talents of some of the party, quite as well qualified for the glow and pungency of social hours—merry without coarseness, and jovial without excess. These revels, however, such as they were, did not limit themselves to very early separations. On the contrary, past midnight, or, as the Old Reekie toppers denominated them, “the sma’ hours” were generally invaded. Against this, the Commander-in-Chief had remonstrated, and I cannot forget one night when we got back to the adjacent domiciles, Nos. 94 and 95, my companions tapped gently at their door, and were astonished,

dismayed, to see it thrown open, and the gaunt figure of Lord Moira standing in his dressing-gown, with a wax light in each hand, ready to admit them. I skulked into the other side of the iron rail, and heard the sonorous admonition, "Walk in, gentlemen! You are aware that I have ordered my servants not to sit up after twelve o'clock, and, therefore, when you choose to stay out so late, it must be my office to be your porter."

Conceive the picture which this scene would have furnished to an artist of grave or comic subjects!

CHAPTER VIII.

EDINBURGH—STORIES.

But now the trumpet, terrible from far,
In shriller clangors animates the war;
Confederate drums in fuller concert beat,
And echoing hills (Pentland) the loud alarm repeat.

ADDISON.

HAVING presented the gallant Commander-in-Chief, *en déshabille*, it may not be amiss to enliven my page with a few other anecdotes of an individual who played so conspicuous a part in the later politics and history of the country. And I must begin with the notice of a dog of mine, because thereby hangs a tale. His lordship, I need hardly relate, married the Countess of Loudon, one of the wealthiest and noblest matches in Scotland. After his return to his residence in Queen-street, with his bride, it so happened that a perverse pointer, which Mr. Elliott had permitted me to keep in his stables behind the house, at the end of a very short piece of garden ground, either took it into his head to begin, or vehemently to continue, a bad custom, hitherto unchecked by any neighbour whom it might annoy,—viz., that of howling a serenade throughout the livelong night. This was worse than marrowbones and cleavers, or the nuptial clangors of street-bands, and I was not surprised at an application from his lordship to abate the nuisance; which was immediately done, and Ponto

removed to country-lodgings within a mile of sweet Edinboro' town.

Soon after this, there was a grand field-day of the Volunteers, and an awful sham-battle fought, in which the company in the First or Gentleman's Regiment, to which I belonged,—the left Grenadiers, under Captain Sir John Marjoribanks—behaved with great gallantry, and only retreated from the spirited defence of an old stone wall in obedience to signal, and not from apprehension of the assailing force of Highland Caddies, though it must be confessed that Donald, in the heat of running, and firing, and climbing, had almost wrought himself into that sort of Celtic paroxysm which could hardly distinguish between a mock fight and a real one. We, nevertheless, retreated, I assure you, leisurely (as ought to have been stated in the general orders after the battle), crossed a green field in tolerable order, and re-formed, in conjunction with other troops destined to the daring attack upon Craigmillar Castle. The castle was stoutly defended at the practicable breach made by the operations, during many years, of Major-General Time, and the foremost of the rash, forlorn hope, were beaten back by the blank cartridges from the guns of the besieged, which literally tumbled a few over, and blew the feathers out of the hats of others. Observing this disaster, Colonel Hope directed a *coup-de-main*. We popped round an angle of the walls, took the enemy *en révers*, and gloriously achieved the triumph of the day by marching through the captured castle and drawing up in line on the other side. The only casualty was a hare killed, whose seat was disturbed amid the hottest of the manœuvres; and the greatest alarm created by several ramrods having been discharged in the excitement of the moment, at the concluding *feu-de-joie*, among the crowd of spectators, fortunately without effect.

Alas, where are the warriors who fought with me on that immortal occasion?—the bruit of which doubtless helped to dispel Buonaparte's Boulogne dream, and save Britain from invasion. Where are my brave comrades of that northern prototype of the storming of Badajoz and San Sebastian? At least ninety-five in the hundred of them are in their lowly graves; no foreign levy can touch them now, after life's fitful fever they sleep well, and soon will all the rest be, with their trophies, swept away, and leave no living chronicler of this memorable fight. There were, I believe, above five thousand Volunteers in the field, and though we can at all times bear the powder of a harmless joke upon the subject, it is no unimportant precedent to look back upon the effect of the Volunteer system, at a very dangerous crisis of England's fate. The thing may have to be done again; and it ought never to be forgotten that arms entrusted to the disaffected, converted them into loyalty and patriotism—such was the result of confidence: and that when an alarm of invasion was actually spread in consequence of an accidental lighting of the beacons, from twenty to twenty-five thousand resolute and well-armed men (with hardly a single absentee), marched in the night for the defence of the Capital, from between the Tweed and Forth, and from the ancient kingdom of Fife. There was small temptation to land troops, however bold and disciplined, upon a coast so guarded, though by raw levies, accustomed only to parades, training, and mimic war.

Agreeably to the usual fashion, numerous dinner parties took place in the evening of Craigmillar's Saint Crispin; and it was about eleven o'clock when I strolled homeward up Queen Street. Still inflamed by military ardour, with the addition of a little wine (and it might be whiskey toddy) I was particularly struck in the moonlight by the two wooden

sentry-boxes which ensconced the sentinels at Lord Moira's door. Like Cæsar it was, *Veni, vidi, vici*, and for the douceur of half-a-crown I prevailed on the good-natured fellows to turn out and do me general honours. In the very midst of this salute, who should appear to the clank of the muskets but the Commander-in-Chief, in *propria personâ* ! It was a grave offence in his eyes ; and very shortly after, my ceremonious regular soldiers were marched off prisoners to the guard-house, for having yielded on their posts to the silly importunities of a red-coated Volunteer. Next day I was thoroughly ashamed, and still more alarmed with the dread that punishment might be the consequence of this indiscretion. I got Mr. Elliott to write to Lord Moira ; and ran to everybody I fancied could assist me, for advice and interest at head-quarters. Among others Tom Sheridan was not neglected, and under his counsel and dictation I was induced to send in my own petition, in which I recapitulated the dog-service, and so seasoned the application as instructed by my friend, that not even the sternness of the strict disciplinarian could withstand it, and he sent me the order for the liberation of the prisoners, with an admonition to be less ambitious till I was promoted above the rank of a private. Ever after he accosted me by the title of Marshal Jourdan ; which name stuck to me awhile, to my no small annoyance.

At this period under the auspices of his lordship, as Grand Master, the union of the ancient and modern Freemasons was perfected, and one of the most magnificent sights ever witnessed, even in Edinburgh, with its lofty and irregular buildings, affording such scopes for scenes of the kind, was displayed. The grand procession moved from the Parliament Square down the High Street, and by the North Bridge, to the Theatre, which was converted into a spacious saloon for the splendid assemblage ; and the

glittering of the Masonic jewels, on deputations from all the Lodges in Scotland and other brethren, together with the brilliant illuminations, and the gleaming of more brilliant eyes from every casement, made the whole a magic spectacle. By this means the Commander-in-Chief was my brother, and for the benefit of Masonry, I will add that the circumstance stood in good stead as a complement to the dog's tale.

Still endeavouring to preserve a few scattered traits of the individuals and period now on hand, I may recur to song and anecdote, such as were wont to delight the ear or set the table in a roar. Sheridan wrote and sung entertaining lyrics far above average merit—I wonder if any traces of them exist; his son Frank, too early lost, as an inheritor of his family's genius, assured me he knew of none being preserved:—and short rich stories used to embellish the conversation, most quaintly told by Lord Elcho and similar original characters—a separate race, by-the-by, numerous in those days, but almost obliterated now by the changes in society. Oddities are becoming every day more rare. The dramatic art has no peculiarities to work upon. People are all about as like each other as flocks of sheep; and seem to move, talk, act, and perform their parts just as if they were all shaped after the same pattern. One of Sheridan's compositions on the disbanding of the army was an amusing specimen. I can still recollect two verses: after disposing of the higher ranks—

“ Says the captain, ‘ I’ll go home
Where my wife and children cry;’
Says the lieutenant, ‘ I’ll to my lass,
For the devil a wife have I.’

Says the serjeant, ‘ I’ll to the highway,
Better do that than do worse;’

Says the corporal, ‘ I’ll go too . . .
So stand and deliver your purse ! ’ ”

The robbing his superior, the Monsieur Halbert, as a

beginning, was a happy thought, and indicative of great fitness for the occupation. As a companion in prose I quote (from memory) the droll old Lord Elcho:—

“I once presided (said he) over a jolly company when it was more customary than it now is, and the more’s the pity, to call upon every guest in turn for a song or a tale, under the penalty, in case of refusal or non-compliance, of a strong tumbler of salt and water. I, at last, came to a contumacious chap, who protested that he could neither sing a song or tell a tale. This would not pass with me, and especially as I had had my eye upon this Billy for some time, and did not at all like his jeering leers and scoffing manners. So I said to him peremptorily, ‘Well, sir, if ye can do neither the one nor the other, you must oblige me by tossing off the tumbler I will now order to be brought to you.’ ‘Stop,’ he cried hastily, ‘let me try first?’ Silence ensued, and he proceeded—‘There was once a thief who chanced to find a church-door open, of which carelessness he took advantage and stepped in, not to worship, but to carry off whatever of portable he could find. He put the cushions under his arms, hid as much as he could, and impudently wrapt the pulpit cloth about him like a plaid. But lo and behold, whilst he was thus employed the sexton happened to pass by, and seeing the church-door open, got the key and locked it; so that when our sacrilegious friend thought he had nothing to do but to slip out as he slept in, he discovered that he was a close prisoner and all egress stopped.’ What to do he knew not; but at last it struck him that he might succeed in letting himself down to the ground by the bell-rope. Accordingly, with it in hand, he swung gently off; and you may be certified set up a ringing that alarmed the neighbourhood. In short he was captured with his booty upon him as soon as he reached

mother earth ; upon which, looking up to the bell, as I now look up to your lordship, he remonstrated, "Had it not been for your long tongue and empty head, I might have escaped ! " "

"I have never ventured to insist upon a gentleman drinking salt and water since."

At or about this time, the day before or day after, as "Moore's Almanac" used to express it, for, in such matters, I do not like to be closely particular, the flirtations provoked by the military gave rise to many little scandals, and Raeburn's clever caricatures embodied some of them in ludicrous and piquant style. They did not extend to *scan. mag.*, but only to a sportiveness and freedom of manner which I merely notice as another proof of the difference then existing between London and Edinburgh—the latter more resembling a country village than a populous city ; and also the difference which fifty years has made in both, and throughout the land. The dispute between two beauties of the best kith and kin, as to who had the handsomest limbs, the same to be shown beneath a curtain behind which their persons were hidden, and the decision entrusted to two or three gallant officers, was a real case in point. Such frolics would not be tolerated in 1852, but in 1802, though they incurred some censure they did not involve disgrace.

As a literary observer, I should be doing injustice to the civilising and refining influence of letters, if I did not offer my opinion that the alterations for the better in Edinburgh, commencing soon after the date to which my preceding descriptions apply, were attributable, in an eminent degree, to the springing up of an independent national system of literature there. From gross living and hereditary coarseness, the inhabitants were suddenly awakened to questions of general importance, and requiring the exercise of intellect

to understand and discuss them. The confined ideas of provincialism were enlarged, and they gradually became to the whole world akin. The "Edinburgh Review" sharpened their wits, Scott's works created new sources of enjoyment; Constable's immense speculations, though ending in ruin to himself, were of extraordinary benefit to his country, from Berwick-on-Tweed to the Hebrides; and Blackwood fell in with new stimulants and fresh materials to augment the movement and complete the change. Thence "Stands Scotland where it did?" Assuredly not. As before, it had been distinguished for ages, in producing men among the greatest of the immortals in every branch of human daring,—statesmen, warriors, poets, scholars, philosophers; so now it burst forth *nulli secundus*, in all the wonderful progress of modern invention and improvement. Her children may well be proud of her!

CHAPTER IX.

AN ARCHÆOLOGICAL EXCURSION.

Land of the mountain and the flood,
Land of green heath and shaggy wood,
Land of my sires, I love thee well.

PLEASURE is no doubt a pleasant thing, but it cannot last for ever, and is often attended by considerable penalties. My opponent in the duel I have mentioned, was in reality a fine fervid creature tingling with Indian blood ; and since our foolish quarrel, in which I had not fired, for I saw his bullet hit the ground between us, in time ; we had continued on warm friendly terms together. He was fond of play, got into bad hands though of Scottish gentlemen, lost all his money, and committed suicide. I was severely shocked, and having been for several months in declining health, my appearance excited some anxiety in the breast of my ever-indulgent master, the kind-hearted Corrie Elliott, of Woollee, W.S. He indeed made our doings now and then, a sport, as it were to lighten the drudgery of business, which he considered it to be if we did as much in a week as an active practitioner might accomplish in a day. I remember having finished a deed to be signed by Dame Janet Grant of Preston Grange, Countess Dowager of Hyndford ; and on my admiring the sonorous romanticism of the name and title, the worthy old gentleman took the

opportunity to play off a joke upon me. He expatiated on the extraordinary beauty of the lady, and contrived that I should carry a letter from him and breakfast with her next morning, taking the parchment with me to be signed, as an excuse. Full of curiosity and expectation, I was timely, for a wonder, at my Lady's residence in a street out of the Canongate (St. John Street, I think); for the old Town still retained a portion of the quality, and was shown into a room to await her appearance from the toilet. At last she came, and to my utter surprise I beheld a wrinkled ancient crone, with a beard that would, though scrupulously clean, have done honour to one of the Witches in Macbeth. At first I could scarcely conceal my amazement, and then it was yet more difficult to suppress my laughter, of which symptoms were doubtless visible, for after a very agreeable meal with one of the best informed and agreeable old ladies I ever encountered, she quietly put to me the question about my risible propensities. There was no way out of the dilemma but the truth, and so I confessed to all her lawyer's instructions, at which she laughed as heartily as I had been inclined to do, and sent me back with a billet to "Corrie" (the accepted abridgment of Cornelius), ironically complaining of his sending his clerk to her on such a sleeveless errand.

But all these well-meant expedients failed to accomplish their object, and I got more and more sickly; which was attributed to my reading too hard for a fancied degree I never aimed to take. I had, however, adopted a freak to read very hard to make up for lost time!—and really injured my constitution by the process. Consumption was predicted, and I was a marked young man, much pitied and caressed. It was almost worth while to think one was dying or even to die, in order to excite such sympathies, and be the object

of such affecting solicitude. I was quite reconciled to my destiny, when an event occurred to shift it into another course. In our office there happened to be the germ of an important plea, which was now brought to a critical position, by an action by certain Messrs. Hunters, merchants in Edinburgh, who claimed to be the legal proprietors of the estate of Polmood, held by Lord Forbes in right of his lady, a Miss Hunter. The documentary evidence was perplexed and interminable, and the genealogical complications such as would have non-plussed Mr. Nugent Bell, and puzzled Sir Harris Nicolas himself. It became expedient for the respondent * to trace and ascertain how the whole race of the Hunters, and Welshes, with whom they had intermarried, had been disposed of from the first syllable of (Parish) recorded time. This was an opportunity not to be lost by my thoughtful benefactor, and I was appointed to search registers and seek health together, on a mission, for several weeks, among the hills and wild localities of the upper districts of Peebleshire and Tweeddale. With the exception of a brief sojourn at a solitary hostelry, where I was instructed to entertain them in capital style, and followed my instructions to the letter, I travelled on horseback from Manse to Manse, and received unbounded hospitalities from the ministers, whilst I examined their Kirk registers and extracted from them every entry where the name of Hunter, or Welsh, was to be found. Never was task more gratifying. The *bonhomie* of the Priests, and the simplicity of their parishioners, was a new world to me, whilst they, the clergy, men of piety and learning, con-

* This appellation sounded drolly enough in a legal paper, wherein describing his being insulted and reviled by huntsmen whom he endeavoured to stop from trespassing on his cornfields, the farmer made oath that "to all which torrent of abuse the Respondent answered not one word."

sidered themselves as out of the world altogether. The population was thin and scattered, the mode of living primitive in the extreme, and the visit of a stranger, so insignificant as myself, quite enough to make a great sensation in these secluded parts. I found the ministers ingenuous, free from all puritanism, and generally well informed. Several of them had furnished the accounts of their parishes for the valuable Statistical Account of Scotland, projected and executed under the auspices of Sir John Sinclair; and since immensely improved in the publication of Messrs. Blackwoods. A similar work would be of deep interest to England; but I must not wander from Tweedshaws, and the mossy uplands where it bubbles into light, whilst Clyde and Annan rise at a little distance from the Tweed and each other; and a small circuit of earth is the mother of three beautiful rivers, which flow in three different directions, adorning and enriching the south and west of the kingdom, till they fall into different seas. The triplex legs, which are the arms of the Isle of Man, might be their symbol.

The examination of the parish books was also a labour of love, and source of endless amusement. They mostly went as far back as a century and-a-half, and were, in the elder times, filled with such entries as bespoke a very strange condition of society. The inquisitorial practices and punitive powers of the Ministry could not be exceeded in countries most enslaved by the priesthood of the Church of Rome. Forced confessions, the denial of religious rites even on the bed of death, excommunication, shameful exposures, and a rigid and minute interference in every domestic or private concern, indicated a state of things which must have been intolerable. High and low were obliged to submit to this offensive discipline and domination. The Laird, like

the hind, had to mount the cutty-stool in atonement for his amatory transgressions, and back-sliders of inferior station were visited still more severely for their moral lapses and "heinous sins." One of the striking features throughout was the evident avidity with which cases of indecent character were hunted out, and every detail investigated, as if the Reverend Inquisitor, whether Minister or Elder, gloated on the obscene revelations which they insisted on being made. Many of these were as filthy, above a hundred years ago, as some of the trials reported in our newspapers are at the present day.

My duty was thus pleasantly and satisfactorily performed. My note-book was full. My skill in decyphering obsolete manuscript was cultivated and improved; and my health was restored as if by miracle. Of other incidents and results I shall only state that on one occasion, to rival Bruce in Abyssinia, I dined off mutton whilst the sheep nibbled the grass upon the lawn,—our fare being the amputated tails of the animals, which made a very dainty dish;—that on reaching Edinburgh, my hackney, having from a dark gallop over a ground where a murder had been committed not long before, and being put into a cold stable, lost every hair on its hide like a scalded pig, subjected me to half his price in lieu of damage;—and that the famous and ancient Polmood remained in the possession of Lord Forbes, as inherited from the charter of King Robert, who gave the lands for ever, "as high up as heaven and as low down as hell," to the individual named in the grant which was witnessed "by Meg, my wife, and Marjory, my nourice."

This was nearly my last exploit in Edinburgh. A delightful excursion over Fife, and visit to Balcarres Castle, the seat of the noble and lively Lindsays, finished my Scottish sojourn. I bade farewell to many dear friends

and companions, and again taking leave of my native home, sought the busy mart of London without a fixed plan, and only vague notions and wishes floating in my imagination, among which the pursuit of a literary life was the most prominent and the least understood. Like a child I could only see the gilt edges and gay binding of the book, and little apprehended the toil of the text, the labour of the brain, and all the troubles and ills that were concealed within!

CHAPTER X.

NAVAL SERVICES.

To rancour unknown, to no passion a slave,
Nor unmanly, nor mean, nor a railer,
He's gentle as mercy, as fortitude brave ;
And this is the true English sailor.—*DIEDIN.*

LONDON on my return to it presented altogether a different aspect to me. Three years had wrought a mighty change in it, in my quondam associates and in myself. The first was, perhaps, merely a delusion of the mind created by the latter two ; for my friends had got into the harness of busy life, whilst I had been loitering on the way. They were full of activity and hope : I had no fixed object, and was unsettled and dissatisfied. This was a very unfavourable condition, and its consequences, as might be anticipated, such as could not be experienced without trouble and sorrow. My resources from home were necessarily limited, my anxieties unceasingly preying on my soul, and my desultory endeavours to achieve my indefinite scheme for provision and reputation, unfailingly abortive ! Such a design so prosecuted could not possibly be successful ; and the inevitable fate of relying upon chance in the chapter of accidents was the consummation of my visionary projects. In a small measure, it is true, I got into difficulties and into debt ; and I mixed in too good and respectable a

connection to have mercy shown to my deficiencies. I endured the consequent annoyances and vexations in secret, sustained by the resentments of an injured man; whereas it was I who had wronged myself, and my own imprudence alone had cast me so far into the power of disappointed creditors and the clutches of grasping attorneys.

It was not much, indeed; but everything is overwhelming where the demands exceed the supplies, and, be he ever so poor, he who lives within his income is infinitely more prosperous and happier than the wealthy person who exceeds his revenues. It was now that I got my first lesson of that fatal truth, that debt is the greatest curse which can beset the course of a human being. It cools his friends and heats his enemies; it throws obstacles in the way of his every advance towards independence; it degrades him in his own estimation, and exposes him to humiliation from others, however beneath him in station and character; it marks him for injustice and spoil; it weakens his moral perceptions and benumbs his intellectual faculties; it is a burthen not to be borne consistently with fair hopes of fortune, or that peace of mind which passeth all understanding, both in a worldly and eternal sense. But I shall have much to say on the subject in the future pages of this biography, though I cannot omit the opportunity afforded by my earliest taste of the bitter fruit which poisons every pulse of existence, earnestly to exhort my youthful readers to deny themselves every expense which they cannot harmlessly afford, and revel on bread and water and a lowly couch, in humility and patience, rather than incur the obligation of a single sixpence beyond their actual means.

In the present instance, my difficulties, distressing in their nature though trifling in their amount, were shortly arranged, and the harpies chased away; but my hardly

recovered health could not withstand the mortification, and I relapsed into serious indisposition. The fire of resentment was extinguished, and lassitude, apathy, and doubt supervened to darken the prospect of one who had found himself so helpless in the hour of trial. The proud and vain reliance on my long and ridiculously flattered talents abandoned me, and I felt a sinking, physical and mental, which made me almost regardless of aught that could happen. In this desponding frame my uncle, who was then surgeon of the *Gladiator* guardship in Portsmouth harbour, deemed it desirable to have me under his own medical care, and, as I could not stay on board as a visitor, I had the honour to be entered in H. M. Royal Navy, assuredly not as A. B., for able-bodied I was not, but, as I have just ascertained, by application to the proper official quarter, as surgeon's clerk, in which capacity I served from October 1st, 1805, to 28th February, 1806, when I was discharged, honourably, my nett pay, or wages, 5*l.* 3*s.* 1*d.*, being paid some months after, as "per order, to Samuel Moses," of whose existence, till I received this memorandum, I was profoundly ignorant. I have only to add that if Mr. Disraeli should receive an anonymous sum of conscience money of about this amount, he may as well give me credit for it; as I never could estimate my naval services worthy of such a recompense either to myself, or my unknown representative, Moses. I was, however, placed in the gunners' mess; the Captain of Marines, Mitchell, married and living ashore, kindly gave me up his cabin and cot: I took my meals with my uncle and other officers in the gun-room, and was occasionally threatened to be flogged for not dousing my glim when the signal was given by the serjeant-at-arms. I nevertheless, read on, throughout the night, though sometimes diverted to the study of natural

history by seeing a train of rats descend the cords by which my bed was suspended, and betake themselves to their gambols, as if nobody belonging to the vessel was there to prevent them, or at any rate no one bearing a commission to authorise interference. The time passed agreeably enough, the scenes were new, and I began to gather strength again. The dreaded Admiral Coffin possessed no terrors for me, and the Lieutenant of the Dockyard, John Price, (gratefully honoured be his name!) became my staunchest and dearest friend. He was a glorious fellow, and every inch what a sailor ought to be, and is painted in the songs of Dibdin or the writings of Marryat. Open-hearted, generous, frank, energetic, and a master of nautical requirements, it was a pleasure to see him get through his arduous duties; satisfying all, praised by his superiors, loved by his inferiors in rank. In his taut Dockyard-boat, assisted by an invalid young midgy, I used to cruise between Portsmouth and Ryde, round the Royal William moored midway, and back again, latterly without fear and in every kind of weather; which, with a less perfect craft, would often have been far from safe. The sea breezes were delicious, and to inhale them,

While shoreward now the bounding vessel flies,

was like drawing in draughts of life. The heart too bounded with the freedom of the motion, and all the spiritual functions of the brain were renovated and enlarged. In other respects my time was not unprofitably spent. There was much to see and learn, and though the information acquired was of an exceedingly miscellaneous nature, still it was knowledge; and in after years very useful in assisting me to view the various topics upon which I was forced, from my editorial position, frequently to give an immediate public opinion. Like taking

care of all sorts of odds and ends, as the old ladies declare that a time will come when you will find them needful ; so is it good to be always learning something or other, in the expectation that the time may come when you will find the possession advantageous.

There were matters which struck me with surprise, awakened feelings of intense interest, shocked and pained me, and in other ways acted strongly on my observant mind. The trial of Admiral Calder by a court-martial was a solemn and affecting sight, which I could not reconcile to my sense of right. The noble presence of the accused, a splendid old gentleman with grey hairs, the obvious uneasiness and regret of his judges, the calm of the dismal proceedings, and the memory of the political murder of Byng haunting the imagination, the impression of the spectacle was altogether of a distressing order.

Then came home a division of the victorious fleet from Trafalgar : the Victory with the precious freight of Nelson's corpse ; the *Téméraire*, the Mars, the Tonant, and other bullet-riddled ships ; whose wooden walls and wounded or missing masts, bore witness to the gallant share they had in the brunt of that immortal battle. The inspection of these vessels was very interesting, and many of the individual yarns of the seamen deserving of being noted for posterity. But I have forgotten such as were told to me, except one of a boatswain's mate, I think, who was pointed out to me as the hero of a marvellous exploit. The *Téméraire* was so closely engaged with an enemy on each side, that the guns could not be run out to fire, without their muzzles absolutely coming against the side of the ship for which the compliment of the discharge was intended. At the station of our mate, two portholes had been knocked into one aperture, and the guns disabled ; but not to be idle at such

a crisis, he seized a boat-hook, and covering himself as well as he could behind a bulkhead, he watched the running out of the adverse cannon, and as the foe stepped forward with the tackle, within his reach, he hooked the luckless wretches one after another, pulled them off their deck, and, giving his weapon a handy twist, dropt them into the sea between the two vessels, never to emerge again. I was assured that he slew half a score of the combatants in this manner, and he was an amazingly stout fellow, likely, if any man, to do the business.

Of the extraordinary force of cannon shot, there was a remarkable example in the *Tonant* (I think). The ball had entered the end of a solid beam of wood, and penetrated it so deeply that it could only be reached by a boarding pike, pushed at nearly arm's length into the splintered breach.

Of the painful circumstances to which I have alluded, I may enumerate my witnessing the wreck of a boat with eight or ten on board, and the finding of two of their dead bodies a few days after in a walk along the shore. There was also a man flogged through the fleet, a spectacle of horror and disgust. The unhappy criminal was taken in a boat, fitted up for his punishment, alongside of every ship, the crews of which were mustered to witness the laceration; and at each received a certain number of lashes, till the surgeon who attended, declared that human nature could endure no more. He was then carried to the hospital to be cured, for receiving the remainder of his sentence; but this barbarity was mercifully spared. Since that day, I never could read a proposition for ameliorating the condition of the navy (or army either) in respect to corporal punishment, nor hear of an improvement in the system, without feeling an ardent desire to wield my pen in support of the former, and

rejoicing in every step adopted for the promotion of the latter. Happily, much has been done, and such a scene as I have described can never degrade the service, nor torture a British sailor more.

Were it possible to tolerate the ever-ready application of the lash to a fellow-man, there was a strange being, one of my shipmates in the *Gladiator*, who might have induced us to fancy it was rather agreeable than otherwise. He was a raw-boned, sturdy Irishman, of the name of Conolly—a namesake, by-the-by, of the Captain; but far from being a favourite with him. His appetite for drink was irrepressible. If he was sent ashore he deserted the boat, at Point or Common Hard, and got drunk. If he was kept on board, he contrived to smuggle liquor somehow or other and got drunk—sometimes, as he averred in stay of punishment on his allowance of swipes! But the fact was that Conolly was always in trouble and irons, and so used to a dozen or two of lashes every ten days or a fortnight, that his life was literally spent between tippling and flogging; to the latter of which he was at last so accustomed that a sigh and hitch of his trousers were all the signs of dislike he gave when his unfortunate back was bared for the sad and disgraceful reckoning he was doomed to pay. Such a man would now be discharged, and the demoralising influence of such revolting scenes avoided.

A convict ship, moored near the *Gladiator*, was another source of painful remark. The general aspect of the black hulk and gloomy looks of its fettered inmates were always bad enough; but frequent mutinies, desperate struggles, suicidal casualties, and severe punishments, rendered the whole a hell, in the neighbourhood of which it was dismal to be located.

These drawbacks, however, did not particularly affect me.

Through Price's introduction, I enjoyed the pleasant society of several families in Gosport. Haslar Hospital ministered to my still undiminished predilection for medical and surgical science, in the latter of which the surgeons were justly famous ; and, above all, I made my first appearance as a poet in print, in the Portsmouth paper.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PERIODICAL PRESS.

Earth's deepest night from this blest hour,
 The night of minds is gone !
 "The Press !" all lands shall sing ;
 The Press, the Press we bring
 All lands to bless.—EENEZER ELLIOTT.

THE event I have recorded at the close of the last chapter is always considered to be an epoch in the life of every author, be he versifier, scholar, scribbler, proser, or poet. There is a mystery in print which no logician has ever explained, no philosopher fathomed. You look at your own hand-writing, it is every day stuff, paltry in your petty account book, insignificant in your ordinary notes to tradespeople, and unimportant in your routine letters ; but in type the case is altered, and type gives consequence to the veriest trifles. Were it not so, we should not see so many of them printed. My *début* was attended with the usual symptoms ; I was restless and could not tell what was the matter with me ; I pulled the paper out of my pocket every ten minutes, and again and again perused my contribution with an intensity of satisfaction, ever growing—ever new. I had been writing lines to this, and lines on that, and stanzas to * * * * * or * * * * * or * * * *, and epigrams, and songs, and the first staves of epics and tragedies, ever since I was ten or twelve years old,—but what were they ? They were

never blackened with printer's ink, never impressed and multiplied by a great machine on wetted paper, never published to the wondering world! Now the deed was done which could never be undone, and I was a printed poet! As the boat, that day, did not seem large enough to hold me, I roamed about from post (the Blue Posts) to pillar, could not conceive why every body looked so hard at me, felt in my pouch for fear I should have lost my treasure, and finally stole to my cabin to enjoy the luxury of solitary musing. Well, I may have coloured this picture rather highly, but the tintings are true to nature; and many a time and oft, when I have granted youthful aspirants room for their first lucubrations in the "Literary Gazette," I have thought of my lines to Wilberforce, and my emotions on seeing them in print. To say they were much admired by my friends and acquaintances at the time, is but to state an invariable truism; but it is an amusing circumstance to relate, that when I had some intercourse with my subject on taking his house in Brompton more than twenty years after, I showed him the verses when at breakfast with the Dean of Carlisle, he, Wilberforce *ipse*, and all the company eulogised my first printed essay as a laudable effusion! My uncle, who had sulked a little at my not having made myself celebrated so soon as he had expected up to 1801-2, relaxed somewhat in his saturnine views, but would not furnish the sinews of war, and I was indebted to the affectionate and worthy Lieutenant John Price, for funds to try my fortunes as a literary adventurer, and returned once more to London.

Behold me now about to launch on the untried and treacherous sea of literature, so alluring to the view, so toilsome in the navigation, so uncertain for the weather and tides, so insecure with its harbour at last. It is a remark-

able fact, nevertheless, that no human creature ever yet embarked on it with any expectation but that of a delightful and prosperous voyage, and an utter disbelief in the possibility of disappointment or wreck ! The production of a morning newspaper is no slight business, and one of considerable excitement to all concerned, — projectors, proprietors, printers, publishers, reporters, and newsvenders. The “Aurora” was the auspicious title of the journal in which I was destined to make my *début* as a reporter, and it was got up in good style by a body of men whose influence was calculated to have an immediate and beneficial effect upon the circulation. As the “Morning Advertiser” had prospered as the concern of the numerous class of publicans, so it was thought the “Aurora,” under the auspices of the fashionable hotel-keepers and landlords of principal inns and taverns at the West End of the metropolis, might stand a fair chance of success. It was a pleasant speculation, and the concoction carried on in a very agreeable manner. The hotel proprietors, who took an active part in the arrangements, were, generally speaking, gentlemanly persons. There was meeting after meeting, and consultation after consultation ; and they were commonly rounded off with a small party by way of finish, and “to talk the matters over less formally,” at one or other of the best hotels in London, the master thereof presiding and seeing “all right.” In due time the plan was fully organised, and as every body is aware that nothing of a public nature can be efficiently started in this great city without a social entertainment, we had a grand muster on the occasion at the Imperial Hotel, Covent Garden, then kept by a Mr. Kinsey, one of the leading members of the “Aurora” committee. To tell in detail what compliments were lavished, what glowing prospects were held

forth, what toasts were drank, and what songs were sung, might not interest my readers : enough therefore to notice that one of the most applauded poetical lyrics of the *fête*, was composed and chanted by the editor-elect, and the following the chorus :—

All hail to Aurora, the pride of the day,
Each blessing her progress attends :
The town and the country both welcome her ray,
As onward her footsteps she bends!

Within a few mornings, Guido's *Matin* Goddess made her appearance, and a handsome one it was. The paper was of a superior quality, creamy and clear, the typography unimpeachable, and the whole performance such as to justify the gratulations which everybody concerned showered upon everybody else. It was really a reputable and promising dawning.

Raw as I was, I speedily discovered that I had got a queer set of colleagues. They were not bad fellows, but they were old in the trammels, and apt for any manœuvre which would lighten their labours ; and the labours of reporting in those days were incomparably far more onerous than the greatest exertions ever called for in the present organisation of the great journals,—the electric telegraph having superseded some of those prodigious efforts to bring up important intelligence from the country to London, for publication within an incredible short space of time. But with regard to Parliamentary reporting, instead of the access to come and go, and relieve each other at all hours, and the gallery allotted to themselves, which reporters now enjoy—in the olden system, nearly the whole staff of every paper, on great occasions, had to wait with the crowd till the doors were opened at noon, force their way with great struggle into the gallery, and secure as well as they could the

back seat, not only as the best for hearing but as having no neighbours behind them to help the motion of their pencils with their knees and elbows. From twelve o'clock till four when the business began, the position thus occupied had to be secured ; and it was only when the outer gallery door was locked against farther admissions, that those who had not the first two hours' (not, as now, thirty or forty minutes) duty to discharge, could venture to steal up stairs to the coffee-room and recruit the physical man for his turn at the wheel. And as a relic of former customs, I may note that the place appropriated for the refecton of strangers was outside of the room set apart for members, and that on the landing at the top of the stairs, on a small table, they could have the most excellent cold beef and beetroot salad for three shillings and sixpence, whilst the luxurious legislators within, might indulge in veal pies, and the most admirable miniature steaks and chops, brought to them hot and hot from the gridiron before their eyes. There was an oddity and piquancy about this, which made a dinner here exceedingly popular ; and the conversion of the accommodations since into a common-place tavern cuisine and attendance, must be declared to be an ill-advised inroad upon parliamentary usages and the ancient constitution of the realm ! I might add also upon the chance gratification of the lieges, when I state in proof, that on one evening of my early reporting career, when the outer hole happened to be full, and individuals known to the servants were sometimes permitted to pass inside, as if by accident, I sat at the same small table with the Marquis of Wellesley, then glorious from India, the Duke of Wellington, then (I think) an indifferent orator, and Secretary for Ireland, and Mr. Canning, in after-life my idolised friend, who were paying their devoirs to the tiny chops aforesaid.

But to return to my "Aurora" companions ; they were nearly all characters, and to show how capable they were of the "dodge" practice to which I have alluded, I need only state that to save themselves the trouble, they contrived to throw the Chancellor's speech in bringing in the budget on me, whose experience did not extend to even easy debates, and a pretty budget I made of it ! But the fourth estate was not then so enormously potential as now, and my budget passed wonderfully without much opposition or censure. Our editor was originally intended for the Kirk, and was a well-informed person ; but to see him at or after midnight in his official chair, a-writing his "leader," was a treat for a philosopher. With the slips of paper before him, a pot of porter close at hand, and a pipe of tobacco in his mouth, or casually laid down, he proceeded *secundum artem*. The head hung with the chin on his collar-bone, as in deep thought—a whiff—another—a tug at the beer—and a line and a half, or two lines committed to the blotted paper.

By this process, repeated with singular regularity, he would contrive, between the hours of twelve and three, to produce as decent a newspaper column as the ignorant public required. Among my other coadjutors were Mr. Robinson, also educated for the Kirk, and a quiet man, Mr. Cooper, the author of a volume of poetry, which procured him the countenance of the beautiful Duchess of Devonshire ; and Mark Supple, an Irish eccentric of the first water ; he it was, who, waking out of an intoxicated doze, and seeing Mr. Abbot on the treasury bench (the house being in committee), called out "Master Speaker, as you seem to have nothing to do, I call upon you for a song if ye plaze." The fierce indignation of the Chair rose hotly against this breach of privilege, and the Serjeant-at-Arms was sent up to the gallery to take the offender into custody ; but Supple

adroitly escaped by pointing out a peaceful quaker, sitting two or three seats below him, as the culprit, and the affair assumed so ludicrous an aspect, that it ended in the worthy broadbrim being turned out in spite of his protestations of innocence, and without having fees to pay. Mark was, indeed, the licensed wag of the gallery, and to my apprehension and recollection possessed more of the humour of a Dean Swift, without acerbity or ill-nature, than any individual perhaps that has lived since his date. His drollery was truly Swiftish, and the muddling, snuffling, quaint way with which he drawled it out, imparted an extra laughable originality all his own. Decorous people ought not to laugh at funerals, or the anecdotes of Supple related in the mourning coaches which followed his hearse, would, much as he was really regretted, have convulsed Niobe all tears.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PERIODICAL PRESS (*continued*).

Such are our guides * * * *
With clews like these we tread the maze of state,
These oracles explore, to learn our fate ;
Pleased with the guides who can so well deceive,
Who cannot lie so fast as we believe.—CRABBE.

THE life of a reporter is somewhat of an anomalous one ; his tasks require considerable skill and judgment to execute them neatly and properly. His fidelity must be assured, for his responsibility is great, and the character of the journal to which he belongs depends upon his truth, and the public intelligence is fed or misled by his representations. The class ought to have taken a higher stand in literature and general estimation than they appear to have done ; one prominent cause of which is probably to be found in the nature of their employment. They are (not so much as they were) night-birds ; but yet are, to a certain extent, debarred from the social relations and pursuits of day. At first the occupation is exciting, and always improving, and I know no better preparatory school for the bar, or almost any description of public life, than the training of a session or two in parliamentary drudgery. It is like reviewing, and by forcing the mind to consider many interesting and important questions, it creates a sort of universality of talent, not always superficial but always ready ; this is a great

advantage, and we have only to look around us for men who have attained high celebrity and station, which may be clearly traced to this kind of schooling.

In a little time, however, the sameness of the work, notwithstanding its varieties, becomes exceedingly unsatisfying and irksome. Occasionally a brilliant affair may light up the imagination, but the tedium of a long continuance of mediocrity to deal with is wearisome beyond endurance. To divert this, and in their nocturnal transitions between the house and the printing-office, or at the close of the business, it is most natural for the reporter to seek some relaxation and amusement, and this induces a habit of tavern recreations, entertaining clubs, and whimsical debating societies, to pass the intermittent hour, till all is over. In the olden times inebriety, or rather indulgences closely approaching it, was almost the rule; now, we believe it to be the rare exception: for parliament, with its afternoon meetings, and watchman-like call of "past twelve o'clock," to wind up proceedings, does not demand such heavy sacrifices from those who are its organs to the wide world.

Our Aurorean establishment went on very well for a while, but as the great morning paper recently observed, "If you want anything spoilt or ruined, you cannot do better than confide it to the management of a committee." The truth was exemplified in the present case, and proof afforded of what I have always seen since that period, namely, that there must be a despotic power at the head of a periodical publication, or it must fall to pieces. Now our rulers of the hotel dynasties, though intelligent and sensible men, were neither literary nor conversant with journalism; thus under any circumstances their interference would have been injurious, but it was rendered still more

fatal by their differences in political opinion, and two or three of the number setting up to write "Leaders" themselves. The clashing and want of *ensemble* was speedily obvious and detrimental; our readers became perfect weather-cocks, and could not reconcile themselves to themselves from day to day. They wished, of course, to be led, as all well-informed citizens are, by their newspaper; and they would not blow hot and cold in the manner prescribed for all the coffee-room politicians in London. In the interior, the hubbub and confusion of the republic of letters was meanwhile exceedingly amusing to the looker-on; we were of all parties and shades of opinion; the proprietor of the King's Head was an ultra-tory, and swore by George the Third as the best of sovereigns,—the Crown Hotel was very loyal but more moderate,—the Bell Inn would give a strong pull for the Church,—whilst the Cross-Keys was infected with Romish predilections. The Cockpit was warlike, the Olive Tree pacific, the Royal Oak patriotic, the Rummer democratic, the Hole in the Wall seditious. Many a dolorous pull at the porter-pot and sapientious declination of his head had the perplexed and bemused editor, before he could effect any tolerable compromise of contradictions for the morning's issue: at the best, the sheet appeared full of signs and wonders.

Public vacillation and internal discords soon produced their inevitable effects. Aurora, "the pride of the day," passed her meridian, and began to get low in the horizon. Her gold-scattering turned out to be rather an artistic fancy in painting her, than a substantial reality. I had succeeded to the uneasy post of editor on the exhaustion of the pot and pipe, but vain were my efforts, and the darkness of night overtook the bright divinity of the morning.

Another of my connexions with the press was not of long

continuance. The "Pilot" evening newspaper was established in January, 1807, by Mr. E. Samuel, a friend to the celebrated Cowslip, Mrs. Wells. He had been Auditor to the Nabob of Oude, and been commissioned to England expressly for the purpose of vindicating the Nabob's cause. Conjoined with him were Dr. Maclean, the sturdy anti-contagionist, and Mr. David Walker; and Mr., afterwards Sir Herbert, Compton, who had come to London for the requisite period of eating dinners in order to be called to the bar, as he had previously only practised as an attorney in India. Honourably distinguished, on his final return home he retired into the amenities of private life, and died about two years ago, sincerely lamented by a numerous circle of friends. In the spring of 1808, I became his co-adjutor for a season, and found in the "Pilot" a great contrast to the "Aurora." All the parties were educated and gentlemanly, and the outside intercourse was as pleasant as that within. Compton, who had chambers in Brick Court, Temple, wrote some humorous articles under a "Sir Frètful" soubriquet, and Mr. Henry Ireland, and Mr. Cyrus Reding, the latter especially, contributed light miscellaneous and other able matter to the columns of the "Pilot," as he has since done as largely as any individual of the age to several of the most popular periodicals. Mr. Walker did a good deal of the "look-about" work, and not much with the pen, which was chiefly wielded by Mr. Samuel. Independently of the Oude support, the "Pilot" was warmly in the interest of the Horse-Guards, and had prime information from that quarter; and some of the officers used to meet at very agreeable dinner parties with the civil officials of the publication.

The newspapers, it may be remembered, had rather an uneasy time of it at this period. Sir Vicary, or, as Queen

Caroline called him, Sir Vinegar Gibbs, filed about forty ex-officio informations within two years, and the shaft of persecution, like the sword of Damocles, hung over the heads of the whole fraternity. A brief retrospect of the *status quo*, reviving names of much familiar note at the time, and talents which had great influence on the community, but hardly one, if one, surviving, may not be devoid of interest.

Belonging to the evening, were the "Star," edited by the scientific Tilloch, the sweetly-poetic Scotchman, Mayne, and Turnbull, an active and clever writer, married to one of the Tweeddale kindred.

At the flourishing "Courier" were Daniel Stuart, who (it was said, originally a tailor) amassed wealth, was high-sheriff of Oxfordshire, and died not long ago in great respect, at a good old age. Also Mr. Street, the acting and active editor, who, with Shakspeare and Burke ever ready at his finger ends for apt quotation, for years after conducted the paper with great spirit, was much in the confidence of government, and led as sumptuous and gay a life, as his partner's was the opposite, decorous and economic. Alas, for the contrast! At last the changes of times shattered Street's fortunes, and he ultimately died in poverty: yet what a career was his. The noble, the eminent, the witty, aye, and the wise, the most distinguished characters of all ranks and professions, feasted at his plenteous board, and yet, in the end, suffered the stricken man to slink into the obscurity of the country, and the date or place of his death to be unknown, even to those his former bounty fed. His extravagance might be a vice (for prudence truly tells that sunshine will not last for ever), but it is not for the "jolly companions" who revelled in its enjoyment, to turn with unfeeling apathy, and often censure, from the havoc they

have helped to make. Sir J. Macintosh, Stuart's brother-in-law (I think), wrote in the "Courier."

The "Sun," of which I was nearly four years editor, at a later date (1812-16), had been established through the agency of George Rose, Charles Long, and other friends of Pitt, to support his measures. Its first editor was Mr. Heriot, promoted to a good appointment in the West Indies, and succeeded by Mr. Robert Clark, for many years the much esteemed printer and publisher of the Government Gazette. He had for a colleague the well known Mr. John Taylor, Monsieur Tonson, of whom I shall have more to say when he and I became unfortunately linked together; and was often indebted for contributions to Mr. Fladgate, solicitor, connected with the paper, and one who said as good things as I ever heard, not excepting those of Sydney Smith or Theodore Hook.

Of the "Globe and Traveller" I remember nothing, except that Mr. Edward Quin, a great city and common council oracle, was connected with it.

Mr. White edited the very libellous "Independent Whig."

Mr. Peter Stuart, brother to Daniel, was the Magnus Apollo of the "Oracle" morning journal, which did not enjoy a very savoury reputation.

Mr. Perry was of the "Chronicle," and with it, in his reign, some young aspirants who have since risen to great fame, first tried their 'prentice hands. Lord Chief Justice Campbell, the late Serjeant Spankie, and others may be mentioned.

Mr. Byrne occupied the "Post," with a staff of high consideration. Dr. Fleming, an elegant scholar; Fitzgerald and Hogan, two well-educated Irish gentlemen; Donovan, another capital Hibernian character, and Walter Henry Watts, long the proud boast of their order in the reporters'

gallery—of whom also I shall have more to say—were conspicuous examples.

At the "Herald," I only to call to memory a gentleman-like person, Mr. McDonnell; and the "Times" kept the secret of its editing so well, that Mr. Walter, or his representative Mr. Lawson, had to bear the brunt of all hostilities; and the abilities of Barnes, Murray, &c., &c., had either not been developed, or were not bruited beyond the mysterious precincts of Printing House Square.

There was also the "Englishman;" and about this epoch, the "Day," or "New Times," Dr. Stoddart; a bitter opponent of the "Times," which christened him Dr. Slop; but nevertheless rejoiced on his removal to Malta, in a responsible official appointment.

There was also the "Statesman," a democratic journal; and the "Globe," before noted, which, though political, directed its intelligence in great measure to the Mercantile world; as did the "Ledger" to the Shipping interests.

From this enumeration readers will gather, that in journalism, as in the affairs of man, there is a tide; and that like man, after their allotted period of existence, they cease to be. They have also, like man, their seven ages; and their characters as years run on, varying as much as those of the most mutable of human beings.

To return for a minute to the "Pilot." Compton, after being called to the bar, left for India. Samuel went out as Chief-Justice to Guiana, and died there. The Fitzgerald of the "Post," already mentioned, became editor, and I occupied his position on the "Post." He, too, was promoted to Sierra Leone, as Chief-Justice, and lived an unusual number of years; whilst his old literary compatriot, Hogan, died shortly after his arrival, with a lucrative legal appointment.

The printer of the "Pilot" I can still see, so oddly do circumstances fix remembrances. His name was Taylor; he lived very frugally, and was master of his duty; and he never got drunk but once a week, viz., on the Saturday night. As Providence, they say, takes care of drunken men and fools, who cannot take care of themselves, Taylor got a prize of the sixteenth of a 20,000*l.* ticket in the lottery; but it made no difference to him—he lived as low, and got quite as drunk every Saturday as before; he was not spoiled by his good fortune!

But one of the most "noticeable" visitors and inmates at the "Pilot" office was Mr. Paull, a dapper little fellow, touched with the small-pox, and dressed in blue coat and leather inexpressibles, the fashionable costume of the day; and a very strange and unbecoming one, either on short, fat, protuberant bodies, or on tall, lank, gaunt, skeleton-like forms, such as William Pitt's. Paull was not rich, but, I rather think, participated in some of the native Indian funds. His duel with Burdett, in Coombe Wood, made a great noise at the time; and I have reason to believe that the general opinion was right, and that Burdett deceived him. Be that as it may, the unhappy being, the year after, destroyed himself, having betrayed no symptoms of derangement only a day or two before.

CHAPTER XIII.

PAST TIMES.

What is experience but the sum
Of incidents and trifles that escape
The heedless eye. But being marked, with care
And conduct, make the thoughtful man a sage.

IN running over two of my early newspaper engagements, I have stepped beyond the dates of several matters of a personal nature, which merely require notice in an autobiographical work.

A narrow escape from an ignoble death occurred to me at the time the grand theatrical question between Kemble and Cooke divided public opinion, and filled Drury Lane and Covent Garden theatres every night. The rival Richards was a grand theme ; but on the occasion to which I allude, the competition was between the cast of the comedy of "Every Man in his Humour ;" both, indeed, performed in a superlative manner, almost every character being a pattern of dramatic skill and effect. Mr. D. Pollock and I were on our way to the theatre, and waiting opposite the narrow passage in Drury Lane which leads to the house, till a waggon passed by ; a post-office light cart galloped up, and endeavouring to clear the waggon, caught the wheel, and was violently upset. The arm alighted on my head, and from that hour (near seven o'clock) to long past midnight, all medical efforts to restore sensibility were tried

in vain. The sedulous applications of Mr. Cartwright, one of the occasional visitors, as I have mentioned, at our literary meetings in Elm Court, at last succeeded in bringing me back to life ; but I was many weeks confined to chambers in a confused and pitiable state. I have mentioned the name of my surgical friend for the sake of recording one of those coincidences which have always struck me as having, perhaps, more in them than is dreamt of in our philosophy, though in the present case not so remarkable as to induce one to ponder over it; but it happened only last year that I was run down by a cab hurrying to the railway station, and though not much hurt, it might have been Drury Lane over again and all over with me, yet it was strange that on getting into an omnibus, who should I meet but Mr. Cartwright, my saviour some half century ago, and whom I had not encountered thrice during the intervening time ! I confess, however, to having met with many coincidences, which I view with a certain tinge of superstition.

Another of my exploits was a walk from London to Edinburgh. The fancy took me ; and pretending a wager, to preclude the idea of poverty, I equipped myself very lightly for the journey, and started early on a Monday morning. I had taken a farewell dinner with Mr. Kerr, in Golden Square, on the Saturday, and, curiously enough, met Sir D. Carnegie, who was about to set out for Scotland with his lady and two children (I think) on the following day. We, laughingly, said we should see each other on the road ; and it turned out that, after Tuesday, there was not a day that we did not pass and repass each other several times. His carriage, and led horse, were no match for my pedestrian activity ; and yet we arrived at the Pilgrim Inn, Newcastle, on the same night (Saturday).

Now that railroads have intersected the island with their network, it would be of little use to preach upon the amount of information which can only be obtained by a tour of this kind, mixing with all comers, and seeking intelligence from the highest to the lowest, especially from the latter. After the first day, when I was somewhat foot-sore with a march of forty miles, I never stopped for the night without being easy and fresh enough to proceed another stage had I liked, and this was a fair boast, after reaching Newcastle at the rate of between forty and fifty miles a day. My plan was a stage before breakfast—a good country breakfast, another stage, a mere morsel for mid-day refection; and then the long stretch, becoming ever more and more agreeable as the cool of the evening prevailed, till the appointed place of rest was attained, with sure provision for a nice bit of supper, and a comfortable bed. Whilst at breakfast Sir D. Carnegie's equipage used to pass my inn, and when they were at dinner I used to pass them; the good lady always pitying my fatigue, and begging me so kindly to ride part of the way in the carriage, that I had great difficulty in winning my (imaginary) wager.

I talked with everybody on the road, especially the lower orders of my fellow-travellers on foot; and to this day I have not forgotten the remarkable amount of new intelligence which I gathered. At our first social meeting at the Pilgrim, on Saturday, I perfectly astonished Sir D. Carnegie with the excess of my information over his; as he had been flattering himself with the extent of his inquiries and acquisitions on horseback. To learn what is worth knowing about any country, it may be relied upon that there is nothing like a well-arranged and properly-supported humble walk.

*

From Newcastle, after seeing the then famous glass-works at Shields, I wandered by Durham and Alnwick, and the delightful Coquet, with its memorable hermit's cave—

“ Turn, Angelina, ever dear, &c.”

into Bamborough-shire, into the plentiful luxuries of which—its Cheviot muttons, its leaping fish, of salt and fresh water attributes, its poultry of every kind, its game, and its eider-down beds, in which any small person might be lost for awhile (Heaven grant that the prosperity of those I remember may be perpetuated in their descendants there!)—into the pleasant luxuries of which, I repeat, if ever an Angelina found her way, neither she nor her gentle hermit would ever dream of going back to the cave.

One of the melancholy recollections of this period is that of my first visit to an East Indiaman, a splendid ship, in which I spent several very happy days. It was the ill-fated Abergavenny, wrecked a week afterwards on the Portland Race, when Captain Wordsworth, a brother of the poet and Dr. Wordsworth, perished with some as noble fellows as ever it was my hap to meet on their own element, and full of every hopeful prospect and generous feeling. One of them, after saving two females, was drowned in attempting to rescue a third from the watery grave he shared with her, when but a stroke or two of his sinewy arms would have oared him to safety.

Another painful incident arose from my finding at the bottom of the ballusters, in Elm Court, a pocket-book, on examining which I discovered that it belonged to a letter-carrier. I wrote to a friend in the Post Office to ascertain the owner; but dreadful was the event to him. His pocket had been picked on his “beat” in Whitehall, and the book, after being rifled, deposited where I found it. The

unfortunate issue was, that it led to the unhappy man's detection of having betrayed his trust, and abstracted money from the letters he had to deliver. Shocked with the prospect of having any share in a capital prosecution, I intimated to Mr. Parkins, the Post Office Solicitor, that I was very ill, and must go to the north; in reply to which I received another subpœna, and a message by the officer, that if I left London I should be brought back by legal compulsion.

The trial came duly on, and the poor criminal—as decent and respectable-looking a person as I ever saw, was found guilty, condemned, and executed. He was a German, of the name of Nicolai. After the trial, the parties concerned in it, barristers, solicitors, witnesses, &c., adjourned to Lovegrove's Hotel, in Doctors' Commons, and spent a convivial evening. I was young then, and thought all the while of the miserable being in the condemned cell.

“ But some must laugh and some must weep,
So wags the world away.”

In enumerating misfortunes, I will close this chapter with the publication of banns, and the commission of matrimony; which, belonging rather to private affairs, need not be obtruded on my readers, especially to the bachelor class :

“ Who, dull to every finer tie,
To every soft affection cold,
Live on in cheerless apathy,
And in their very youth seem old.”

CHAPTER XIV.

PAST TIMES CONTINUED.

The days gone by—from shore to shore
Their ever-lengthening shadows spread ;
On, on, till Time shall breathe no more,
And Earth itself be with the dead :
Each brief unnoticed minute bears
The mandate of its God on high ;
And death and silence are the heirs
Of days gone by—of days gone by !—SWAIN.

I HAVE already mentioned my accession to the staff of the “Morning Post,” and I subsequently reported nearly three sessions for the “British Press,” so that my apprenticeship in this line filled, with a few vacations, almost the customary term of seven years. Within that period I had migrated from furnished residences in Craven Street, Strand, and Curzon Street, May Fair, to a roomy, old, and old-fashioned unfurnished house in Old Brompton, called Cromwell Cottage, a short distance from Gloucester Lodge, the last abode of Mr. Canning, in which domicile I lived for several years.

Cromwell House, close by, and said to derive its name from being one of the secret sleeping-places of the Protector in the vicinity of London, was inhabited by an amiable family of the name of Dakin, nearly related to the Prebendary of Westminster ; and several of my other

neighbours were "noticeable" people. Blanshard, the comic performer, had a cottage at hand ; and a larger house was occupied by Mrs. Hedgeland, now the wife of a tea grocer, better known as Isabella Kelly, the authoress of some popular novels, and the mother of Sir Fitzroy Kelly, the present Solicitor-general. The eminent lawyer was then a very pretty, smart, boy, with a younger brother equally attractive in his smaller way, and a sister. Mrs. Hedgeland, as well as the latter, is still, I believe, alive, and better provided for than in not very distant bygone years, though enjoying an annuity from the Lonsdale family, in which she was a governess. The second son became enamoured of the stage, and whilst his legal brother rose to wealth and distinction, afforded another melancholy example of the folly of reliance upon desultory pursuits, instead of learning a profession or a business. Under the assumed name of Keppell he tried his fortune in Romeo, and I think also essayed his powers in America, but without success ; and, after suffering great mortifications, he died prematurely with an almost broken heart. His person was small, but his proportions and countenance well suited to the part of the devoted Italian lover ; nor were his endowments of a mediocre order, but fortune did not smile upon him, he was hardly ever known beyond a very limited circle, and is now forgotten. As a memorial of him, I add a letter respecting his début, as I remember, at the Queen's Theatre, near Tottenham Court Road, and which failed to make a sufficient impression upon the public.

" 8, Charlotte-street, Fitzroy-square."

" MY DEAR SIR,

" Availing myself of your kind permission, I enclose to you one of my announcements, and I have only to add, in reference to what I said on Sunday, that as this

is my first appeal to a *London* audience, and with the rank I hold in the theatre, it is a matter of *pride* (independent of any feeling of interest) that my house should be a good one. I do not know why it is, because you have done me former favours, that I am to presume on your *adding* to them,—though, as *Sterne* tells, ‘we water a twig, because we have planted it,’—but any influence you will use in my behalf on this occasion, I shall most gratefully remember; and with your numerous connexion you have amply the power: but the *Pit* of our house is the most material part of it, and if I fail at all, it is there I fear. But, enough! I will enclose to you any number of tickets you think you can disperse, and you will of course feel at liberty to return what are not used.

“Allow me to remain, with my best thanks for your good-nature towards me, on this and other matters,

“My dear sir,

“Your faithful and obliged servant,

“W. HORACE KEPPELL.

“P. S.—Waylett has promised to play for me, although her own benefit is advertised as her last night. She has permitted me to advertise that she consents to play for my benefit, being positively her last night.”

Among other pleasant neighbours we reckoned a family of Rapers, who tenanted the cottage once inhabited by the famed Miss Gunnings. Adjoining were the Woods, a merry and agreeable Northumbrian race; the second very pretty daughter, now the dowager Mrs. Compton, of Carham, a lovely spot on the Tweed, near the site of my vignette; and Mr. Vincent Dowling, so generally known for his talents in the periodical press, and as the acknowledged supreme

chronicler of the Fancy World and Life in London. He was my tenant in a cottage standing in the same garden, and called the Bath, from an ancient and very cold accommodation of that sort, in a small orchard adjoining the dwelling. Miss Glossop, afterwards a favourite cantatrice on the stage, was also a neighbour. The whole of this little suburban locality bore traces of having been of some note in former times. I dug up statues and other pieces of sculpture ; and I had reason to believe that if Oliver Cromwell did not, Chief Justice Hale did, occupy Cromwell House ; which was the very building for a ghostly romance, and, in point of fact, haunted in my time so as to create considerable alarm, but, happily, on investigation, discovered to have nothing supernatural in the noises, nor so fearful to the servant maids as was at first supposed. Old Noll's fetch and the other Hale fellow well met, were exorcised, and the place restored to tranquillity.

But besides what I may enumerate as constant resident neighbours, there was an occasional summer occupant of a retired cottage on the other side of Cromwell House from me, and nearer town, who had a frequent visitor whom it was no small gratification to meet in the privacy of a very limited, very confidential, and very social circle. The amphytrion was Mr. Peake, the father of the humourous and facetious Dick (whom much I esteemed) and treasurer of Drury Lane Theatre ; and his guest was Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who, after business was got through somehow or other, or anyhow, turned about, and to old Brompton, with renovated gusto, to pleasure. It was truly delectable ; but no body could describe what it was. It was an abandonment of self, and a charm cast on all around. There was none of the prepared wit for which Moore gives him credit, but a natural overflow of racy conversation and anecdote. The most

extraordinary conversations men whom I have known were Sheridan, Sydney Smith, Canning, and Theodore Hook ; but they were all as dissimilar to each other, as if the realm of wit and humour were peopled by quite different races, "Black, White, Mulatto, and Malay," who all spoke different languages, saw with different eyes, and fancied with different imaginations and peculiarities of mind. Sheridan charmed, Canning fascinated, Sydney Smith entertained, and Theodore Hook amazed you. Sheridan threw himself into your arms and upon your heart with such apparently boundless confidence, that you could not help considering yourself, at once, a trusted friend ; and on many and many a trying occasion did he reap the benefit of this implanted feeling. This is not, however, the place to dissect character ; and though anticipating time by a quarter of a century (having spoken of the elder, and the second Sheridan in my preceding pages) I will not leave the name without adding a few words of a third, Francis or Frank, the son of Tom, whose early loss, in my opinion, deprived it of another lustre which would have shone brightly in a family constellation, brilliant alike in the male and female stars. Frank Sheridan was a warm-hearted, generous youth, and though playfully pictured by his relative as

"The fine young English gentleman,
One of the modern times :"

had stuff in him, like the fifth Henry, to make these wild-oat foibles only the foils to his mature and shining light. I have read poetry of his composition which well deserved preservation ; and a full comedy, written when barely of age, was proof how richly he inherited the genius of the author of the School for Scandal. Respecting this drama I have a note to the writer from poor Tyrone Power, who observes, "I long to see your comedy. As

your grandfather said of himself, I say of you, 'You have it in you, and, confound you, it must and shall come out.'"

As the rest of this note touches on theatrical matters, and is a fair specimen of Power's clever off-hand manner, I make no excuse for copying it here. It is addressed from America to the Garrick Club, London, and runs thus :

"DEAR FRANCIS,

"I beg you will receive the bearer of this billet kindly, even for love of us ; his name is Maywood, he is a manager, and an honest man ; a Scotchman, and a liberal man ; a player, and a gentleman ; and you know rarely these accidents combine. Moreover, he's jocose, bibulous, musical ; and, above all, my friend. I've ask'd Mills* to get him on the club as a stranger ; urge the matter, Lord Mulgrave will do it. Your letter from Jamaica came duly to hand, and old Com. Gen. Forbes has our thanks. Herbert is gone to Italy. Eh ! at New York I found his cousin ; what doing, think you ? Why, teaching Latin and editing a magazine. I would that George were capable of anything like this, and one would not mind his going to the devil for a while. I hope you will find our other friends yet unchanged, and lively. Give my love to everybody, and write to me about home, and everywhere

" Believe me,

" Your's, dear Sheridan,

"TYRONE POWER."

I append the letter from Frank, which enclosed this scrap, and which will serve to show that our "fine young English gentleman" was quite alive to affairs which required notice or correction, and where friends were concerned.

* Mr. Francis Mills, a first-rate dramatic connoisseur, fine judge of the arts, and pleasant and accomplished gentleman.—J.

"MY DEAR J.,—

"If you will read the report of the Literary Fund dinner in the 'Morning Post' of Monday, you will see that the writer (who, from the folly and malevolence of the article, I take to be L * * *) has stated that Lord Mulgrave sat still, &c., when the Queen's health was proposed. Now you know that after the King's salubrity has been eulogised in a becoming quantity of cheers, no one's health is drank uproariously except such as are present at the dinner—this was intended, and ought to have been the case when Adelaide's health was drank. But there were people present (and I heard before the feast that there were to be), who wished to turn the hilarity of the evening into a political squabble. Hence that foolish piece of spite, in its appropriate journal, "The Morning Post." The Queen (God bless her!), whose taste in literature is undoubted, spells through its columns every day; nor did she omit to do so last Monday; the consequence was, that she complained of Lord Mulgrave's neglect in cheering, as it was there asserted. He is annoyed at this, and wishes it to be contradicted, as he behaved most loyally on the occasion, the only mistake being that which I mentioned, of not thinking it necessary to depart from the established rules of toast-giving. Therefore do you, like a good soul, in your report of the dinner to-morrow, take up your goose-quill in his defence, and state how absurd and mischievous the report must have been: so shall you acquire *κudos* and thanks. I enclose a slip of correspondence, which I have just received from our friend Tyrone, and have put his friend's name down for the club; so add to your favours by shoving your name under mine.

"Farewell!

"Yours affectionately,

"FRANK SHERIDAN."

"Friday, 13th June, 1834."

CHAPTER XV.

LITERARY OCCUPATIONS.

Here lies * * * * *
Who long was a bookseller's hack ;
He led such a d—mn—ble life in this world,
That I don't think he'll wish to come back !—GOLDSMITH.

DURING the period I have been speaking of, my regular literary occupation was connected with the "Morning Post," and afterwards with the "British Press ;" but I was also a contributor to the "Satirist," a monthly publication, edited by Mr. George Manners, from whom I subsequently purchased the copyright, and tried my luck with a new series, divested of the personalities and rancour of the old. This purchase was a beautiful example of the bargains made in so business-like a style by literary men. Mr. Manners was a gentleman in every sense of the word, full of fancy and talent, acute and well-informed. For aught I know, he is now a British consul in America. He sold me the magazine, the stock, and the house in which it was published (No. 267, Strand), as folks say, in a lump, the latter being vouched as respectably tenanted. But I turned out not only an unsuccessful speculator in the publication, but a still more unfortunate landlord. My first floor was held by a good-looking mantua-maker, with four or five younger assistants ; and they all literally laughed at me when I

called for rent. Not a farthing did I ever get from the concern. My other tenant was the agent for one of the wealthiest mines ever discovered in Wales, but who was equally abstemious in regard to paying for his lodgings ; and as I could not suffer him to grin at me, like the ladies upstairs, and threatened him with I know not what ; he very civilly bade me farewell, and, as a proof of his confidence, enclosed the large door-key to me in a letter, P.P.A! To end my house-owning adventure,—I possessed it still when the “Literary Gazette” commenced, and it became the publishing office of Messrs. Pinnock and Maunder,—I disposed of it, and received bills on the Newbury bank for the price. The Newbury bank was robbed, and stopped payment. My bills were *non inventus* ; and it was a dozen years after that the honesty of the parties found means to discharge the debt.

In the way of jobs there were, and I daresay there are, often literary services required of individuals, who become known as writers for the press. Some of them are honourable, some lucrative, and some hardly to be squared with very correct feelings, though not absolutely disreputable. But they are things which, upon after reflection, you would rather wish you had not done, or had anything to do with. I had helped a comrade, hurried to complete his work, a lift in the translation of Staal’s *Corinne*—a task which repaid itself in the pleasure of performance ; but I was not so well satisfied with my next production, though I cannot now recall the grounds of my dissatisfaction—it was the composition of a novel under the title of “*New Canterbury Tales*,” the material furnished by some captain, or I forget what, and the literary shape given by Mr. Michael Nugent, the undertaker, and myself. Nugent was for many years a reporter, and an exceedingly clever man, thrown

away as the cleverest reporters, unfortunately for themselves and the public, too often are ; and I daresay there is nothing seriously objectionable in our joint labour (should a copy still be preserved), though I think it was done to gratify some personal feelings, and avenge some wrongs attributed by the author to the party we were engaged to expose. At the time it seemed like hunting a polecat or badger, but, as I have confessed, did not bear the morrow's review as a gentlemanly sport. I have, however, dwelt more on the subject than it deserves.

It was better, and more congenial employment, to edit provincial newspapers in London, which, though absurd as it may seem at first sight, is just as effective (with a sub-editor on the spot for the local news, &c.) as if the writer resided in the place of publication. For the political intelligence had to come from town, to be handled in the country, and it was quite as easy and expeditious to have the news and the commentaries sent down together. I do not know whether the railroad system, and the greater importance of the leading provincial journals, now, may have altered this practice, but it was previously a source of considerable revenue to the gentlemen engaged in such communications. Thus I edited the "Sheffield Mercury" for a number of years, and at other times a Birmingham, a Staffordshire Pottery, an Irish journal (for which I never was paid), and others in various parts of the country, to the sound edification of their readers, and the entire relief of their proprietors, who had nothing to do but eat their puddings and hold their tongues.

The details of my London contributions to the press, in a subordinate position, could possess but little public interest ; and all I shall hope to do, with the sanction of my readers, will be to allow me in future volumes to submit

a selection of such articles (the newspaper phrase comprehending everything), as I may flatter myself are worthy of preservation. They are scattered about in many a quarter ; and I never could trace or recover half of them. Even in this, my first volume, I venture to submit one specimen of my extra-harness,* voluntary, votive offerings, which was contributed in aid of an unfortunate brother scribe a good many years ago.

Of my writings in the "Morning Post" the most effective, in one sense, were a continuation of "leaders," as editorial comments are designated, pending the memorable charges brought by Mr. Wardle, and sustained by the evidence of Mary Anne Clarke. In these I made an abstract of the parliamentary proceedings from night to night, and earnestly maintained the cause of his royal highness against all comers, denouncing the conspiracy against him, and exposing the misdeeds of his enemies. I am not now going to revive the question, nor give my opinion of the measure of weakness on one side, or falsehood on the other. Sorely did the duke prove the truth of the poet, that "Our pleasant vices make instruments to scourge us" as certainly and more severely than our crimes; but the appeal has been made from Philip drunk to Philip sober; and I believe that history will clear the accused from all the grosser stains with which Party and Malicious revenge laboured so fiercely to blacken his character. But be that as it may, the tide of popular resentment ran far too strong at the time to allow of any resistance. The outcry was too loud to admit of any other voice being heard; and though I shouted as vehemently as I could, it would be inconsistent with truth to assert that I succeeded, to any extent, in arresting or modifying the overwhelming current

* See Appendix F.

of condemnation and censure. On the contrary, I do not believe that there is an instance of any journal sinking so rapidly in its circulation as the "Post" did in consequence of my able and spirited articles. In the course of a fortnight I reduced it by more hundreds per diem than it would be expedient even now to state; for I am persuaded that the effects of my lucubrations were not only so potent, but so permanent, that the paper has not yet recovered its palmy condition and wide diffusion: that the work cost me great toil and trouble is a fact not to be disguised. I remained in the House of Commons every night during the whole debates. Thence I went to the office and did my best and worst for the next morning's publication; and then, generally about three o'clock in the morning, I walked from the Strand to Old Brompton, a fair three miles. One way and another I had my mind engaged, and my pen in my hand, above nineteen hours in the twenty-four; and let me say, the exertion was extraordinary. Towards the conclusion it was so overpowering, that I literally learnt to walk in my sleep, and could, on my way home, pick out the most convenient portions of the road to take a nap *en passant*! Thus between sleeping and waking, a pint of mulled madeira, and a bit of dry toast, re-invigorated me for the resumption of my task in three or four hours. But my principal, Mr. Byrne, never failed, nor shrunk from what he conscientiously believed to be his duty, as the following note will testify:—

"Morning Post Office, Saturday Morning."

"DEAR SIR,

"Accept my best thanks for your continued friendly and able assistance. I am going to take a run to Brighton this morning, but shall be back to-morrow evening in time, I hope, to do the necessary business. As it is not impos-

sible, however, that I may be delayed on my journey, you will exceedingly oblige me by looking over the Sunday papers ('Observer' and 'Englishman'), and writing a few observations on the leading intelligence of the day.

"Most truly yours,

"N. BYRNE."

Yet in the midst of all this turmoil there were interludes of rather exciting amusement. Mrs. Clarke resided in a house in the King's Road, a short distance from Sloane Square, on my way to town, and as I happened to have been introduced to her at her sister's, Mrs. Casey, she thought our acquaintance intimate enough to excuse an invitation for me to call upon her. Such a chance, when all the world were crazy to have only a glance at the *Leonne* of the day, was not to be thrown away, and accordingly I very soon waited upon the lady. Her object, as may be surmised, was to neutralize my pen, and the wiles to which she resorted would make a delicious chapter in the history of woman's ingenuity. I found myself as a bird, I suppose may do when caught in a net; but the meshes were of many shapes and kinds, and reticulated with infinite skill and cunning. Wheedling confidential secrets, allurements, prospects of advantage, piquant familiarities, *recherché* treats, and lies. Never was a greater variety of artillery brought to bear upon a newspaper scribbler; and, at least, *Madame* so far accomplished her wishes, that I did moderate my tone about her personal performances, and was debarred from using other intelligence, lest it might be said that I stole it from the enemy's camp. And a queer camp it was: the resort of dozens of M.P.'s, and of curious strangers, as ambitious of favourable reception as the most eminent legislators of the realm. Though all

agreed in one pursuit, or rather in two pursuits, the downfall of the commander-in-chief, and the smiles of the modern Aspasia, there was, nevertheless, no small modicum of envy, jealousy, backbiting, and all uncharitableness among themselves. Thus I remember the patriot Wardle, it was whispered, had seduced a Miss R * * * * * when on a visit to his wife, of which the *éclat* was heightened by the young lady's being taken ill at a party, and producing some new music on the occasion. Mr. Biddulph was grossly ridiculed about some three hundred pounds he had foolishly invested on Dalilah promises; and Lord Folkstone, and others less prominent, hardly escaped with credit from this capital realization of the "School for Scandal." It was part of the "dodge" to make me laugh at these and similar jokes; and I must confess to some merry and beguiling hours spent in the society of Mary Anne Clarke; so that, between her and me and the "Post," I fear the illustrious Duke lost a trifle in the violence of his defence.

A visit from the 30th of June to the 24th of July, which I had the pleasure to pay to the mess of the 95th Rifle Regiment, at Hythe, in 1809, was an incident of exceeding interest to me. From a soldier's welcome, in that short time, I became intimate with many gallant fellows who were lost in the ill-fated Walcheren expedition, and, within a few later years, shed lustre on their names and glorified their country in the Peninsular Campaigns. Methinks I see them now on the heights of Hythe, the most animated of human kind. The early morning bugle called them from their tents and barracks; their duties were attended to; and all else was gaiety and happiness. Dinners, parties, balls,—

How stands the glass around?

For shame, you take no care my boy;

Let mirth and wine abound;

* * *

and the expectation of being soon in active service, were enough to raise to fever height the spirits of the brave band in whose society I passed these few weeks. Wade, Travers, Perceval, Miller, Pemberton, Duncan, Stewart, Macgregor, and others, had their meed in the battle bulletins from Spain, whence few returned to enjoy the laurels they had so nobly earned, and some of these so crippled and weakened by wounds, as to be little better than the phantoms of the joyous, healthy, flesh and blood athletes, who in all the pride of early manhood and strength, were riding, swimming, and performing with ease the most fatiguing exercises of their corps, and feats of great activity and vigour, only some brief months before. I marched with my friends to their embarkation at Deal, and but for matters of absolute necessity overcoming my excited enthusiasm, would certainly have accompanied them on the expedition. As it was, I rejoiced in their company to the last, slept for two or three nights on board the *Superb* and *Seraphis* ships of the line, under the auspices of Dr. Gaunt (a fellow surgeon with my uncle) ; took a run up to Canterbury, and on the way back saw *Blue Peter* flying, and the departure of the grandest fleet that ever sailed, at once, from the shores of England. Above three hundred vessels spread their wings to the wind, and from North Foreland to South, the Channel was one cluster of moving vessels—a sight never to be forgotten, whilst “memory holds a seat.”

CHAPTER XVI.

WARS AND JUBILEES.

Not a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
 As his corse to the rampart we hurried ;
 Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
 O'er the grave where our hero was buried.

* * * *

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
 From the field of his fame fresh and gory :'
 We carved not a line—we raised not a stone—
 But left him alone in his glory.—CHARLES WOLFE.

MISERABLE was the failure of this mighty host ; and, to compare ludicrously small things with nationally great, unfortunate was my condition when left alone on the desolate strand ! On returning to the inn where I had left my luggage, I discovered that, in the hurry of embarking, not only had my convenient large cloak been taken away, but also, that by the same accident, all my wearing apparel had disappeared. As the fleet was, by this time, nearly out of sight, it was of no use trying to signalise it for the restoration of the lost clothing, and so I was obliged, will-i-nill-i, to take a sailor's advice on the occasion (which I have found very applicable on many a turn of fortune since), videlicet, to "grin and bear it." But still there were inconveniences attached to the circumstance, which cast the grinning towards the wrong side of the mouth, and

made the bearing about as annoying as it was ludicrous. In a pair of nankeen trousers, which did not look the cleaner from contact with boats and ships, and a shirt to match, I perambulated the coast to Edmonds's hotel, then the prime resort of Margate, into which, in spite of Silvester Daggerwood looks, I was admitted, as I had been once before, on my walking tour, into the hotel at Newark-on-Trent, on account of my "gentlemanly appearance," which struck the waiter and the landlady, when they found there was no chaise at the gateway, and that I was only a pedestrian. In the latter case I could and did transform myself from dust and travel, by means of soap and clean linen out of my knapsack; but at Margate I had no resource—not any. I had not money enough left to purchase slops, if such things were, and what to do I knew not. Yet why should man despair when there is woman in the world;

Oh woman, in our hours of ease
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please:

* * * *

But when misfortune wrings the brow
A ministering angel thou!

And a ministering angel did Miss Edmonds become to me when I communicated to her the secret of my distressed situation. She consigned me to a private chamber and a cosy bed, and so arranged that, trousers and shirt being left on the outside of the door, I could take a nap of a couple of hours till a gentle tapping apprized me that I might poke out my naked arm, and re-invest myself in the spotless habiliments of civilized society.

How trivial, I hear a brother critic exclaim. *Siste, Viator*—stop, my friend. For years I "patronised" Edmonds's hotel, and introduced many excellent customers to its comfortable accommodations. Among the rest was

one who laughed at my washing adventure, and somehow took a fancy to the blooming and kind-hearted creature who was so apt at getting a man out of difficulties—and so he married her ; and, as the old tales have it, they lived happy together all the days of their life. Thus we may conclude, as the moral of the lesson, that—

“ Good deeds are never ill bestowed ! ”

Another of the episodes of the year, was a visit to Windsor to participate in the Jubilee rejoicings, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the reign of King George the Third. I was accompanied by Turnerelli, the sculptor, to whom his Majesty sat for his bust ; touching which I may relate an anecdote, characteristic enough of the manner and astuteness of the sovereign. Sitting one morning, he abruptly asked, “ What’s your name ? ” “ Turnerelli, Sir ! ” replied the artist, with a proper inclination of his head. “ Oh, aye, aye, so it is,” rejoined the monarch ; “ Turnerelli, Turnerelli—elli, elli, that is Turner, and the elli, elli, elli, to make the geese follow you ! ” Such was George the Third’s accurate opinion of adding foreign terminations to native names.

We were, however, well received and well treated at Windsor. I had written and published a Complimentary Poem (forgive the phrase) on the occasion. It was as loyal and patriotic as if John Reeves himself, who was the Magnus Apollo in this line, had composed it ; and being presented to the Queen through the ever kind, considerate, and pre-eminently accomplished Princess Elizabeth, had the good fortune to be favourably viewed by her Majesty. The compliment was agreeable to royalty, and the return very agreeable to the subjects concerned. In short, we were noticed, and handsomely provided for at all the fêtes—

might, I dare say, have ate as much as we liked of the finest steaks cut from the ox roasted whole (a revolting spectacle, and almost enough to make the spectator renounce roast beef for ever); and, in short, were laden with condescending attentions, and an ample share of all the good things and pleasures of the festive time.

I have not been a careful preserver of my productions, and have not (I now wish I had) a copy of my "Eclogue," which, if I remember rightly, appeared as the writing of W. J. André, an anagram of my name, which, like the signature of "Teutha" (the ancient name of Tweed), used by me from the period of my earliest to my latest contributions to the press, may guide the curious (if such there may be) to many of the anonymous essays, in prose and verse, of William Jerdan.

Having, in the preceding chapter, alluded to the famed and unfortunate Walcheren expedition, and subsequent Spanish campaign, under Sir John Moore, which terminated in the disastrous masterly retreat and fatal glorious victory of Corunna, I will take the opportunity of adding two or three military reminiscences connected with the friends I have spoken of, and two or three later years of Wellington's splendid career in the Peninsula, which, alas! still more reduced their number, and augmented my unavailing regrets.

My first anecdote relates to another dog story, but affords a remarkable instance of animal preference and attachment, for which no cause can be assigned by human reason or the closest observation of natural history.

From the very commencement of the retreat to its termination at Corunna, a splendid Spanish pointer devoted himself to one of my friends, an officer in the 95th, and never quitted him by night or day, on march, in bivouac,

or in action. This extraordinary fidelity attracted much attention, and often amused and interested the sorely harassed companions of the invulnerable and invincible Carlo. The rations were not always so plentiful as to yield a glut of provisions to account for this predilection, nor was the actual service of the corps to which he belonged of a nature to keep him from desertion ; for the Rifle Brigade covered the retreat, and was hardly out of fire from the first to the last. In the heat of this incessant skirmishing did the faithful creature appear absolutely to take delight ; and, as my friend remarked, if one could imagine the soul of Hannibal, in a state of transmigration, to occupy the physical fabric of a spaniel, it was assuredly present here as the latest metamorphosis. But Carlo was not left in Spain ; not even the confusion of the embarkation of the army at Corunna could separate him from his chosen master ; he was given to me, and I respected and loved him, till he died of old age ; and, if it were so, released the immortal soul of the immortal Carthaginian hero, to inhabit another tenement.

A singular adventure befel Captain, afterwards Colonel Miller, distinguished for his improvements in the important arm of artillery (now so earnestly sought, but in his time only beginning to be fully estimated), who was taken prisoner in the unsuccessful descent of an English force, by way of diversion, near Cadiz. Here the dark jacket and unobtrusive facings of the rifle uniform stood him in good stead ; for while his red-coated companions in captivity were safely escorted to prisons, he availed himself of the advantage of his invisible green, and seizing a propitious moment of the night, escaped from the French guards, and sought freedom by flight. How he fared across the whole southern width of Spain need not be told ; but one day the commander of an English picket

on the frontiers of Portugal caught sight, with his glass, of a very ragged, suspicious-looking, and apparently disguised individual, uncertainly dodging about, as if desirous, yet afraid to approach nearer the British lines. A file of men were immediately dispatched to bring the stranger in—to be shot if a spy, and dismissed if he could render a credible account of himself. But neither happened. The tattered and torn man, who had paused to ascertain whether he was in the neighbourhood of friend or foe, turned out to be the worthy Captain Miller; and the lieutenant who apprehended him, in the midst of his gladness, might be a leetle disappointed, when he found that he was not within a step so near a company as fleeting fancies had suggested for the last two months, during which there had been no tidings of his wandering superior officer.

These are the jests, and sports, and singular incidents of war, which may, to a certain extent, lighten its horrors. But it is a grim-visaged and ugly monster, and cannot endure one moment's humane or Christian examination. Too hideous to look upon, and too horrible to comprehend, in its massive features, with thousands of men lying dead or dying on the battle-field; it is no less atrocious and detestable when considered in its details, and the vast amount of suffering and mourning which it inflicts upon every class of society, is added to the fearful hecatombs of absolute destruction and slaughter. As Sterne took a single captive bird to illustrate his touching text against the deprivation of liberty by man of his fellow-man, so will I copy a simple individual letter of the date belonging to this episodiocal period, to show how the calamities of war pervade the whole community, and afflict thousands upon thousands whose injuries and griefs are never whispered to the public, or known to the country. It is, to be sure, a

private letter, but it touches feelingly on the evils of war, and may have an effect where more general arguments would fail:—

“Bath, Feb. 27th, 1814.”

“MY DEAR JERDAN,

“I have this moment been presented with your letter, written on the 5th of January. It has been to Gascony, and returned to me here. Be assured that I never for a moment considered that any neglect or want of cordiality on your part had been the cause of your silence. I knew that you were constantly engaged in some literary pursuits of difficulty in a public capacity, and to that score placed the discontinuance of your valuable and friendly correspondence. On my part I really did believe that the unmeaning tittle-tattle which I might be able to transmit to you, though received with indulgence and welcome, would too much occupy your time.

“It is rather extraordinary that neither Wade nor Travers informed you of my arrival in England, as I sailed long before either of them. You know that I was wounded on the 2nd of August [he was shot from one of the last muskets that were fired, and a fine, handsome specimen of man made a suffering cripple for life], the last of those nine days of carnage which took place in defending the blockade of Pamplona, and in forcing the enemy to relinquish the territory of Navarre. Although I had good advice, my wound, which was through the knee, and my bodily health and strength, daily became worse and more alarming. I therefore embarked at Passages on the 2nd, and arrived at Plymouth on the 13th of September, at which place I was confined to my bed for four months, in the most deplorable state. The joint was much shattered, and most excruciating agony was endured the whole period.

Constant fever, and the expenditure of nearly half a pint daily of matter and lynoria so much reduced me, that I scarcely appeared to my friends to have a chance of surviving. With the greatest care, attention, and patience, my bodily health has been restored ; but though anxious to get to London, I have as yet been able only to reach this place, where I arrived ten days ago.

“ I have become so much stronger, that I have determined to recommence my journey on Wednesday next ; and spending a few days with a Mr. Methuen, near Devizes, hope to reach my old billet at Ibbotson’s by about the 10th of March. I will not fail to give you notice of my arrival, and hope to have an early opportunity of shaking my good friend by the hand.

“ Much is said about pensions and pensioners by the Burdett party ; but I have the hope of becoming a fat pensioner on account of the loss of my limb, which, though not in fact cut off, yet has been so much cut to pieces, that I fear I shall never regain the use of it.

“ So—another recruit ! By my soul, you are a *plodding* fellow ! And this is the difference between us—you, my good friend, while you have been moving inhabitants *into* the world, to endure the calamities and vexations incident to nature, I have been as piously moving them *out*, and adding to the population of the New Jerusalem, and the strength of the holy army of martyrs. As I hope so soon to have parole intercourse with you, I shall defer making any observations on our late campaigns, till we get together over a bottle of old port, whose genial influence will open the magazines of my memory, and display its motley stores to your contemplation and use.

“ MacGregor I have not seen since we left Madrid : he was then just recovering of a wound he had received in the

action of Salamanca. Miller arrived at Passages a few days before I sailed. He purchased three or four horses of me, which I hope turned out well to his satisfaction—one of them was a wicked rascal, though an excellent one, and I hope he has not broke poor Geordie's neck. Oh God, that I had the use of my limbs, and made one of that glorious band of heroes who are now aiming at the destruction of the odious dynasty of France! But I must still have recourse to that snivelling virtue—patience.

“Rest assured of the unfailing esteem and regard of

“Your sincere friend,

“A. WALE PEMBERTON.”

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CRIMINAL.

Alas ! alas !

Why all the souls that were, were forfeit once ;
And He that might the vantage best have took,
Found out the remedy. How would you be,
If he, which is the top of judgment, should
But judge you as you are ? Oh think on that,
And mercy then will breathe within your lips,
Like man new made.—SHAKSPEARE.

AMONG my other miscellaneous movements during this period was a mission to Oxford to be present at Lord Grenville's installation as Chancellor of the University. It was a splendid and interesting ceremony, and as crowded as possibility or practicability could, any how, accommodate. I should have been obliged to walk the last stage, for want of a fore-ordered conveyance, but for the good-nature of Mr. Sheridan, who, having stopped with Lord Fitzhardinge to dine at an inn on the road, instead of plunging into the confusion at head-quarters, lent me a chaise to extricate me from my difficulties at approaching night. I have no vocation to describe the stately and brilliant proceedings—it is enough to remember that some visitors, for want of lodgings, slept in their carriages on the first night, when exorbitant prices were demanded, and that I had to pay five guineas a week for a three-pair-back room in an obscure

lane, besides extra for (non-) attendance. I have ever since thought it hazardous and expensive to be a freshman at Oxford, which may, perhaps, account for my education not being finished as it might have been ! An autumnal visit to Tweedside prepared me for the winter's labours ; and the following year, a week or ten days at Cambridge, and the shooting season at Harlow Bush—quite at hand to claim the Dunmow flitch of bacon, if I could have swallowed the oath as easy as the fat—did for me the same. An engagement to attend the committee on the Regent's Canal was soon after a profitable employment. My duty was to write a *précis* of the day's proceedings—not more than half-a-sheet of letter paper—for which I received my fee regularly along with the counsel, and on the whole netted between 140*l.* and 150*l.* ; going from the committee-room in good heart to my work in the gallery of the House of Commons.

I have now to record two events of a painful nature ; the one of private, the other of public interest. The first relates to the melancholy fall from rectitude and respect of an individual with whom I lived on terms of constant intimacy, and who, till the moment of his detection and disgrace, was one of the pleasantest and best-liked persons in the social circle of Brompton, where he resided. His name was Hammon ; he was a clerk in the banking house of Birch and Co., Bond-street, in which he had risen, by time and talent, into a handsome salary, and the confidential position he abused ; had married the daughter of a highly respectable tradesman in Curzon-street, and, with the prettiest little wife in the neighbourhood, entertained their friends and visitors in the neatest and best appointed small abode which the vicinity of Hans-place and Sloane-street could boast. He was himself good-looking and intelligent,

rather *petit*, but very gentlemanly; always carefully dressed, agreeable in his manners, and obliging in his disposition: was it to be wondered at that he was a general favourite, and that his *ménage*, altogether, was viewed as a pattern of the utmost domestic comfort and happiness? And so it might have been sung of it—

I said if there's peace to be found in the world
The heart that is humble may hope for it here!

Alas! how deceitful are appearances; bitter were the ashes within the core of this golden apple. Hammon, to sustain expenses beyond income, furnished another of those sad examples which I have been exhorting, especially my younger readers, to shun like pestilence, and which must ever lead to misery, if not of the aggravated character of actual guilt, tending, at least, to moral debasement and mortifications most painful to bear. By a curious system of fictitious entries in the bank books, posting into the ledger items as if read to him from the day-book, or, *vice versa*, reading from the day-book imaginary items for another clerk to post into the ledger, he contrived to appropriate what sums he wanted, and to keep the process secret, so that at the time there was no semblance of irregularity. When the annual balances were struck, the amount of defalcations was discovered; but no retrospective examination or auditing could arrive at the cause.

At last the mine exploded, and the offender fled. Never shall I forget my dismay and sorrow when one morning on descending to breakfast a letter was put into my hands written by the unhappy being, dated from Tothill-fields prison, briefly stating what had befallen him, and begging for my pity and succour. An event so utterly unexpected; a

calamity so deplorable and irretrievable ; a prospect so horrid and appalling, crushed me down, and, for days and nights, filled my mind with wild wandering thoughts and dreadful visions, which were distressing in the extreme. I had never come into contact with Crime before, so as to see its hideousness, and watch its awful consequences.

I trust the exalted moralist, the strict, the sanctimonious, the self-approving sinless, will not be startled by the statement that the unfortunate Hammon was comparatively innocent of wrong. I am no apologist for the artful means he employed for his unrighteous purpose, nor for his flagrant breach of the inflexible laws of honesty and honour, nor for the dangerous doctrine, that the absence of evil intention can justify evil acts ; but in the instance before me I am simply telling the truth when I say that there were palliatives in the case which might make stern Virtue pause, and Justice hesitate. There was enough to condemn, and the well-being of the community might render it absolutely necessary that punishment should be awarded ; but for the sake of frail humanity, even in its lowest degradation, I would fain put in the plea that some genuine, though dormant, good may lie in the breast of the fallen malefactor. Cases of hardened guilt and atrocious crime I have had no opportunities to observe ; but even among these I was assured by the worthy ordinary of Newgate, the Rev. Mr. Davis, there are very few which do not yield some traits of a redeeming nature, and the re-awakening of consciences, which prove that though the divinity within had been silenced for a season, it had not been entirely obliterated. All that I contend for, then, is, that in such transgressions as Hammon's, the world ought not to put on the impenetrable armour of outraged impec-

cability, but rather, in the feeling language of Burns,
that man

Should gently scan his brother man ; .

nor, as another poet has it,—

Shut the gates of mercy on mankind.

Hammon went unsuspected to the coast, and might easily have escaped to the continent by hiring a boat (for it was during the non-intercourse period), but he insanely loitered for several days, as if at play with his existence, and was consequently apprehended, committed, tried at the Old Bailey, and sentenced to death.

During all these fatal transactions I saw him frequently, and endeavoured to impress upon him the serious and wicked character of his delinquency, but all my arguments were vain. By a strange perversion of the moral faculty, he never could be brought to feel or confess that he had been guilty of a grave offence, and far less of one worthy of the severest penalty of the law. This was his argument: he had never intended to wrong or rob his employers; he had, it was true, helped himself for temporary convenience, but he was resolved to replace every farthing. To this end, having been disappointed in his wife's fortune, which instead of being forthcoming on their marriage, was settled to be paid at her father's death, he had endeavoured to sell a house belonging to him, in Vere Street, valuable as being near Ibbotson's hotel, and convenient for lodging its over-numerous frequenters, but the negotiations had been protracted—he dreaded detection in the Bank—and fled. Such were the opiates with which he beguiled his proper senses, the flattering unction which he laid to his sinking soul. In all his transactions out of the pale of the banking-house, he was not only honourable,

but rigidly punctual and correct : I knew of thousands of pounds belonging to individuals which had passed through his hands, and been most faithfully dealt with. How can we account for such anomalies, such contradictions, such blindness as this ?

Deeply interested as I was in the fall of the wretched convict, and of his amiable wife, I strained every nerve to save him from execution ; there was a legal distinction in his case resembling that of Aslett, which afforded some footing, and his fair conduct and integrity in all beyond the scene of his fraud, helped me farther on ; so that I procured numerous respectable signatures to a petition for the modification of his sentence ; and having, from my own position, ready access to the government authorities, where the fountain of mercy lay, I urged every favourable circumstance which could strengthen the application. For a while the scales hung dreadfully on the balance ; the prosecutors were inexorable ; and the portentous words, " Justice must take its course," rung frightfully on my ear. Under these impressions, I went to speak with the unhappy man in the condemned cell, and received a shock the effect of which, though quite casual, has not been obliterated to this day, when I shudder at its bare remembrance. My spirits were excited almost to distraction by the interview, and I wrung the poor fellow's hand, perhaps for the last time, and rushed from the dismal place. To my horror I found the doors bolted and egress denied ; I screamed for the gaoler, but no one answered my call ; reason had not time to exercise its influence, and after another fruitless effort with hand and voice, I tried to grasp the iron fastenings and fell down, as if shot, perfectly insensible upon the pavement. I had luckily been observed though not answered, and I awoke under stimulants in the governor's apartment, to

learn that according to custom the gates were shut at the particular hour for the convenience of the turnkeys, and other prison regulations. My nerves, however, did not recover the stroke for several weeks.

Another, and a disgraceful incident preceded my final success, and though I have publicly alluded to it years ago, and was only dissuaded by prudential friends, from making it a matter of serious charge against a high legal functionary, I yet relate with reluctance, in the firm belief that such a thing would be utterly impossible in the present day. In the course of our beseeching of interests in every quarter, to aid us in our salvatory endeavours, I accompanied Mrs. Hammon and another lady to the chambers of the then Recorder of London, familiarly, and to my judgment rightly, called "Black Jack," who (I think) had tried the cause, and had therefore paramount influence in directing the result, in order to obtain his merciful representation to the Secretary of State. We went to his house or chambers in Chancery Lane, and made our errand known to an attendant, who communicated its purport to his master. At his desire Mrs. Hammon was shown up stairs, whilst her friend and I waited in the room below. What was our astonishment, in a short while, to see her rush in, aghast and panting with terror—the Angelo of that infamous hour, had proposed to her to go with him to Richmond from the Saturday to Monday, as the condition of his recommending the remission of her husband's life!!! This fact may appear incredible: it is literally true! But to end this tale. I ultimately procured a commutation of the sentence, and leave for the criminal to transport himself for life.* I got him, with a full knowledge of his antecedents, into the employment of a humane and worthy wine merchant of

* See Appendix G.

Bourdeaux, with whom, however, he did not continue long. The last I saw of him was many years afterwards, when he risked his neck by an *incognito* visit to England; and the last I heard of him was, as the most dapper and active waiter in a large French hotel between Calais and Paris.

His unfortunate wife retired into the North of England; and blameless and excellent as she was, I should regret, if still living, that ever this volume of my chequered life should fall under her notice.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MURDER OF MR. PERCEVAL.

Murder most foul, as at the best it is,
But the most foul, strange, and unnatural.—HAMLET.

A meditated and contrived murder.—HENRY V.

A murder which I thought a sacrifice.—OTHELLO.

My narrative of this catastrophe, which I hope may not be without its moral,—teaching the best-intentioned to take heed how they stand lest they fall,—has occupied so much space that I must open a new chapter for the second, and far more important event, which I announced as having befallen within the sphere of my personal action. I allude to the murder of Mr. Perceval, on the 11th of May, 1812, the full and exact particulars of which have never yet been laid before the public ; though the broad facts have been truly stated, and even the details, generally, communicated with so near an approach to accuracy, that were it not desirable to have so momentous a piece of History free from all error, I should hardly deem it necessary to re-write, with some additions, the narrative published from my pen, in Fisher's National Portrait Gallery.*

About 5 o'clock of the tragical day referred to, I had

* See Life of the Rt. Hon. Spencer Perceval, vol. i. 1830.

walked down to the House to listen, in my turn, to the interminable debates in Committee on the Orders in Council, which were very briefly reported in the newspapers. On ascending the broad flight of steps which led to the folding door of the lobby, I perceived the minister, with whom I had the honour of a slight acquaintance, immediately behind me, with his light and lithesome step following in the same direction. I saluted him, and was saluted in return, with that benevolent smile which I was so instantly destined to see effaced for ever, and pushing open and holding back the half door, to allow the precedence of entering, I of course made way for him to go in.

He did enter, and there was an instant noise, but as a physical fact it is very remarkable to state that, though I was all but touching him, and if the ball had passed through his body it must have lodged in mine, *I did not hear* the report of the pistol. It is true it was fired in the inside of the lobby, and I was just out of it; but, considering our close proximity, I have always found it difficult to account for the phenomenon I have noticed. I saw a small curling wreath of smoke rise above his head, as if the breath of a cigar; I saw him reel back against the ledge on the inside of the door; I heard him exclaim, "Oh God!" or "Oh my God!" and nothing more or longer (as reported by several witnesses), for even that exclamation was faint; and then making an impulsive rush, as it were, to reach the entrance to the house on the opposite side for safety, I saw him totter forward, not half way, and drop dead between the four pillars which stood there in the centre of the space, with a slight trace of blood issuing from his lips.

All this took place ere with moderate speed you could count five! Great confusion, and almost as immediately great alarm ensued. Loud cries were uttered, and rapidly

conflicting orders and remarks on every hand made a perfect Babel of the scene ; for there were above a score of people in the lobby, and on the instant no one seemed to know what had been done, or by whom. The corse of Mr. Perceval was lifted up by Mr. William Smith, the member for Norwich, assisted by Lord Francis Osborne, a Mr. Phillips, and several others, and borne into the office of the Speaker's Secretary, by the small passage on the left hand, beyond and near the fire-place.—It must have been, pallid and deadly, close by the murderer ; for in a moment after Mr. Eastaff, one of the clerks of the Vote Office, at the last door on that side, pointed him out, and called "That is the murderer !" Bellingham moved slowly to a bench on the hither side of the fire-place, near at hand, and sat down. I had in the first instance run forward to render assistance to Mr. Perceval, but only witnessed the lifting of his body, followed the direction of Mr. Eastaff's hand, and seized the assassin by the collar, but without violence on one side, or resistance on the other. Comparatively speaking, a crowd now came up, and among the earliest Mr. Vincent Dowling, Mr. John Norris, Sir Charles Long, Sir Charles Burrell, Mr. Henry Burgess, and, in a minute or two, General Gascoigne from a committee room up stairs, and Mr. Hume, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Pole, and twelve or fifteen members from the House. Meanwhile Bellingham's neckcloth had been stripped off, his vest unbuttoned, and his chest laid bare. The discharged pistol was found beside him, and its companion was taken, loaded and primed, from his pocket. An opera-glass, papers, and other articles were also pulled forth, principally by Mr. Dowling, who was on his left, whilst I stood on his right hand ; and except for his frightful agitation, he was as passive as a child. Little was said to him. General

Gascoigne on coming up and getting a glance through the surrounding spectators observed that he knew him at Liverpool, and asked if his name was Bellingham, to which he returned no answer, but the papers rendered farther question on this point unnecessary. Mr. Lynn, a surgeon in Great George Street, adjacent, had been hastily sent for, and found life quite extinct, the ball having entered in a slanting direction from the hand of the tall assassin, and passed into his victim's heart. Some one came out of the room with this intelligence, and said to Bellingham, "Mr. Perceval is dead! "Villain, how could you destroy so good a man, and make a family of twelve children orphans?" To which he almost mournfully replied, "I am sorry for it." Other observations and questions were addressed to him by by-standers; in answer to which he spoke incoherently, mentioning the wrongs he had suffered from government, and justifying his revenge on similar grounds to those he used, at length, in his defence at the Old Bailey.

I have alluded to Bellingham's "frightful agitation" as he sat on the bench, and all this dreadful work was going on; and I return to it to describe it as far as words can convey an idea of the shocking spectacle. I could only imagine something like it in the overwrought painting of a powerful romance writer, but never before could conceive the physical suffering of a strong muscular man, under the tortures of a distracted mind. Whilst his language was cool, the agonies which shook his frame were actually terrible. His countenance wore the hue of the grave, blue and cadaverous; huge drops of sweat ran down from his forehead, like rain on the window-pane in a heavy storm, and, coursing his pallid cheeks, fell upon his person where their moisture was distinctly visible; and from the

bottom of his chest to his gorge, rose and receded, with almost every breath, a spasmodic action, as if a body, as large or larger than a billiard-ball, were choking him. The miserable wretch repeatedly struck his chest with the palm of his hand to abate this sensation, but it refused to be repressed.

All the doors had by this time been locked and bolted, and all the avenues examined and scoured. Nothing of accomplices was discovered, as, in fact, there were none, and the deed was a solitary act of blood and vengeance. The disorder, however, began to be resolved into form, though the consternation and anxieties of the parties engaged in these movements seemed rather to augment than to diminish. In a few minutes when the nature of the calamity was ascertained, the murderer was conveyed to the bar of the House, escorted by messengers, and with my hold never relaxed from his collar till he stood there ; and the speaker having taken the chair the proceedings were initiated and carried through. It was found that the Commons could not take cognizance of the matter, and the House was accordingly adjourned in order that the magistrates present, Mr. M. Angelo Taylor, Mr. Alderman Combe and others, might investigate the circumstances and pronounce on the course to be adopted. Before them, in a room up stairs, Bellingham was arraigned, witnesses examined, and the prisoner, who hardly spoke, committed, with due precautions, to Newgate to take his trial for the murder. It is my hope that the depositions and examinations on this preliminary inquiry may be preserved, *in extenso*, as they will furnish a more accurate account of the whole transaction for future history, than can be extracted from the meagre and law-shaped statements which were found to be sufficient for conviction on the trial, but by no means

satisfy the plain, simple truth as it relates to the appalling tragedy I have described. And I am the more desirous of this in order to have justice done to my own individual share in the sad affair ; for though there is little to boast of in having seized an unresisting man, yet as others chose to plume themselves on the courageous act (which required no courage, but which they did not perform), and to speak mysteriously of the dangers to be eschewed from the loaded pistol, I consider it due to myself to assert that no hand was laid upon the assassin in the lobby, except my own, and Mr. Dowling's for a few moments, till he relinquished it to go in front, and empty the pockets of the criminal, handing the papers to Mr. Hume, who identified them by his initials, J. H., to be produced in evidence when wanted.

The minutes of the Grand Jury, if such are fully kept, might also throw a light on some particular parts ; and I the rather allude to this possibility, to have an opportunity of expressing my strong opinion upon the evils of the system supported by this branch of our criminal jurisprudence. The precognition in Scotland, as it is conducted by the public prosecutor, contributes admirably to the pure and satisfactory administration of justice, between the country and the accused ; but as the business is transacted within the province of the Grand Jury, nothing can tend more distinctly to the perversion of facts and the poisoning of the stream at the fountain-head. As in this momentous case, the witnesses are assembled in the Grand Jury waiting-room, comparing notes, and talking of what they said or did. Unconsciously, or through vanity, there is a too common aptitude in many persons to appropriate to themselves the doings or merits of which fellow-witnesses have informed them, and generally speaking there is (especially

in difficult questions, of which this was not an example) a disposition to fill up, and, as it were dove-tail the circumstances, in order to make them all consistent and without flaw for the opposite side to employ in defeating the process. Although not at variance with the main and obvious features of this murder, there was a good deal of odd transposition and concoction between the 11th of May and the 15th, when the criminal was tried and doomed to die. Upon this inconsistency, at the time, I consulted Sir Charles Long, one of the earliest witnesses in the lobby ; and I may note that it was one of the first things which recommended me to his cordial friendship (lasting to the day of his death, as will appear in some, I trust, publicly interesting documents in a future volume) that I forbore to publish a plain and truthful statement of the whole catastrophe, for which he could vouch ; because in the alarm and agitation which pervaded the country, it might produce a dangerous effect to call in question any of these erroneous impressions, seeing that, though false as regarded persons and smaller acts, they were substantially true as regarded the perpetration of the crime and its condign punishment.

The judicial ordeal in the committee-room up-stairs was attended by some accessions of eminent statesmen and members of Parliament, some of them intimate friends of the deceased, who were deeply affected by the solemn and painful proceedings. For myself I was so shaken by the awfulness of the event, that I was leaning on the stair-balluster for support, and believe I should have fainted but for the kindness of Mr. (now Sir Charles) Burrell, who procured a draught of water for me, and himself administered it to my parched lips. I have a grateful remembrance of this relief of forty years ago ! Without

being so revived I could not have had power to give my evidence. Mr. Boys, a solicitor from Margate, who was in the lobby with several witnesses from that place, in support of a bill for improving the pier, played a conspicuous part on the occasion, but was not called on the trial; where, indeed, other witnesses answered for him as they did for me.

The committal was formally made out about nine o'clock, and the prisoner sent, securely guarded, to Newgate. The wonderful speed with which the intelligence spread over London and the suburbs is almost incredible—one might have supposed there were electric telegraphs, so unaccountable was the rapid diffusion of the information, and the alarm it occasioned throughout the populous circle, as if a revolution had broken out, and been commenced with a foul murder, unparalleled for national concern since Felton's assassination of the Duke of Buckingham.

On my weary return home to Old Brompton, I found that the news had penetrated that retirement, and excited great uneasiness, which was only dissipated by my arrival with the striking proofs of Bellingham's pre-determined resolution, and the mortal means by which he executed it. I had with me a manuscript copy of his petition to government, to "remunerate his losses, and give compensation for his personal sufferings:" it is written and signed "John Bellingham," in a bold mercantile hand, and marked, as I have noticed, with the initials of Mr. Hume. This document I had afterwards bound, and with a plan of the lobby and its occupants, and a facsimile of the fatal pistol, presented to my much-valued friend Sir Francis Freeling.* I had also the pair of pistols, and kept them till the day of the trial; when there was a prodigious struggle for their possession among the official persons engaged in the prose-

* See Appendix.

cution and the lawyers ; and to whose lot they fell after I gave them up, I am ignorant. I, however, laid them down on a sheet of paper, and traced their size—not three inches in the barrel, but a rather wide bore, and very strong in every part. The only other remarkable article, which, however, I still retain, was a plain but powerful opera-glass in a red case ; and it was important, as it had frequently been seen, during the fortnight before, in the assassin's hands in the gallery of the House of Commons, whence he surveyed the members below, and ascertained surely by asking the reporters which was Mr. Perceval. There can, therefore, be no doubt but that he had long fixed upon his victim ; and given up the idea, if he ever entertained it, of murdering Lord Leveson Gower, whom he accused of traversing his commercial course in Russia.

I received my subpoena on Thursday, the 14th, attended at the Grand Jury and the Old Bailey on Friday, the 15th, but was not examined ; and the wretched being expiated, as far humanly as such guilt can be expiated, his atrocious crime, in front of Newgate on Monday, the 18th ; one week having sufficed to fulfil this memorable tragedy.

CHAPTER XIX.

PINDAR, HOGG, BOWLES.

Genius is of no country, her pure ray
Spreads all around as genial as the day;
Foe to restraint, from place to place she flies,
And may hereafter e'en in Holland rise.
Why should we then abroad for judges roam,
When abler judges we may find at home?—CHURCHILL.

FROM these dark themes will my readers allow me to seek refuge for myself and them, by disregarding the order of dates, and offering them a foretaste of the correspondence with which I hope to make my work more interesting to them, and the literary world at large, when I come to busier times and the distinguished individuals with whom they brought me into contact. In serious Opera, I have generally observed the audience pleased with the Divertissement between the acts; and I trust my interlude will be equally well received.

Peter Pindar was a comical animal, and not easily to be over-reached, however clever he might be in the way of over-reaching; of which a notable instance is related when he "took in" all the astute combination of London publishers. A meeting was convened (as I have heard described), at which Dr. Wolcot was to treat for the sale of his copyrights to this united body, which in those days

acted in concert with regard to important new productions, and the joint purchase of established publications. This was "the Trade;" a name of wealth and might. The Doctor had previously been unwell, but the booksellers had received no intimation how extremely ill he was. They were almost shocked to negotiate with a person who had one foot, if not both, in the grave. Peter was pale and worn, and afflicted with a cough so dry and hollow that it went to the heart to hear it. It was of little consequence to him what bargain was struck; in his dying condition he would prefer a considerable sum down at once, to dispose of as he thought proper: on the other side an annuity was suggested, they hoped he would speedily recover, and enjoy it for many years to come in ease and independence. Peter had no idea of what possible value an annuity could be to him; but, to cut the business short, after a good deal of haggling and a great deal more of fearful coughing, which threatened to choke him on the spot and put an end to the treaty, he consented to take an annual allowance more apportioned to his evanescent state, than to the real worth of the wares he sold. The contract was engrossed and signed, and the forlorn recipient no sooner put it in his pocket, than he wiped the chalk off his face, dropt all practice of his hectic and killing cough, and in a lively manner wished his customers good bye, as he danced out of the room, laughing at the success with which he had gulled them. Tom Campbell used to say, he greatly admired Buonaparte because he had shot a bookseller (the heroic and unfortunate Palm): had he been here in the same ironical mood, he must have worshipped Pindar.

He escaped, poor old gentleman, as well out of his famous crim. con. case, where it was endeavoured to entrap

him into damages, for doing nothing but teach the wife of his lodging-house host to spout tragedy, as he assured her she would be as great as Mrs. Siddons on the stage. To bare her breast, and throw about her arms, let down her disheveled hair, were the natural parts of this dramatic tuition, and so the jury thought, and found a verdict for the defendant.

Of his negociation with government I can give an authentic account, which for the sake of all poets, I am sorry to remark did not redound to the credit of the satirist. His writings had a wide range, and great popular effect ; and his absurd pictures of the King, tended to make nearly the whole country believe that his Majesty was little better than a simpleton or a fool. Some of these squibs annoyed the monarch, or at any rate his family, and most attached and loyal servants ; and when it pleased God to visit him with the sore affliction of wandering reason, his ministers felt a laudable anxiety to guard against any chance of vexation from the venomous pen of this modern Thersites. I was interested enough to inquire into this matter, and the explanation I received from the most authentic source was as follows :—

“ All I can recollect of the point to which you refer is that the gentleman in question (P. P.) proposed through a friend to lend his literary assistance in support of the measures of government, at the time referred to, with the expectation of some reward for such services. He did nothing, and then claimed a remuneration for silence, and for not having continued those attacks which he had been in the habit of making. This claim was, of course, rejected, and he took his line accordingly, ridiculing and slandering as before.”

Tremendous was Gifford's denunciation of him :—

“ But what is he that with a Mohawk's air,
Cries havoc and lets slip the dogs of war?
A bloated mass, a gross, blood-boltered clod,
A foe to man, a renegade from God;
From noxious childhood to pernicious age,
Separate to infamy in every stage.”

The account of the rather uncommon transaction annexed (would it were otherwise) will, I am sure, be read with interest by every literary person and admirer of the justly famed Ettrick Shepherd. The first letter, signed C. D., I received with the Sheffield post-mark upon it, and never knew more of the generous writer, who or what he was. I bought a bank post bill with it, and remitted it to the owner.

“ SIR,

“ The enclosed Bank of England Note, value twenty pounds, is sent for Hogg, the poet, by his very true friend,

“ C. D.”

I have, for the moment, mislaid the Shepherd's acknowledgment of this liberal tribute to his genius, but will endeavour to supply its place by another letter from him, when I had also the good fortune to be the medium for forwarding a still more substantial token of the esteem in which his honest heart and original talent were held. The acknowledgment is very characteristic.

“ Mount Bangor by Selkirk.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I received your's, containing the valuable present, with no little astonishment; indeed 'I could hardly believe my ain een,' as we say, when I opened it. I now see what hitherto I have sparingly believed, that it is not those who

make the most glowing expressions of esteem and admiration, &c., that are most to be depended on. I was three days with Sir W. Scott, at Abbotsford, last month, and among the first things he inquired was, if I had written to you, and of your answer. I told him your's was a friendly letter, but cherished no hopes whatever. He said he was sorry for that, for whatever you took by the end you generally made a point of carrying, and he heard there was, or soon to be, a pecuniary vacancy, and no more passed. I am yet at a loss whether it is the same society which we corresponded about, or another one, to whom I am indebted for this most timely and welcome relief, but, at all events, I am sure you were the moving spring of the grateful act. I shall speak of it to no man save Sir W. Scott, and for your credit I cannot but mention it to him. My circumstances are, at present, such that, in spite of the spirit of independence natural to a Scotsman, I gladly accept of the proffered boon, although I would fain hope only as a loan. And after the deep interest you have taken in me, it is proper you should know that it is not my own family concerns that have straitened me most, but those of others; the whole weight of three families, with their expenses, having fallen on me, and just at a time when both farming and literature were standing with their backs at the wa', and my means quite inadequate to the charge. For four of these individuals I expect remuneration in whole or in part, at some future period, but at present it is wanting. My father-in-law is removed from this stage of existence since I wrote you,—an excellent old man, reduced from great affluence to a total dependence on me. My frail mother-in-law, with her attendants, are now incorporated with our own family, so that, in that respect too, my expenses will be greatly shortened, and upon the whole I

hope to get over my present difficulties. I have a good many MSS. lying by me, for which I can get no conditions for the present whatever, and the whole of my works (save the last poem) are, I believe, out of print. If there are any you could advise me to republish, with a little furbishing up, I should be very glad of your advice. I have been thinking of two neat vols. of 'The Shepherd's Callander,' never yet published by itself, but have tried nobody. If you were to announce it, it might give it some *éclat*. But I am wearying you, my dear sir, with selfish considerations, for I am really so proud at finding that I have a *real* and *sterling literary friend* which to my fondest estimations has hitherto proved rather equivocal, that I hardly know what I am saying. Be so kind as return my grateful thanks to the benevolent society that sent me this timely aid, and not mine only, but those of the aged and infirm, as well as the young and the destitute, and believe me ever,

"Your's most truly,

"JAMES HOGG."

That all the letters addressed to journalists are not so flattering or pleasant will be seen by the following very pithy and brief epistle, which I have pulled out of a large bundle for the present, as a specimen of the class.

"Shepton Mallett.

"As an editor of a paper stil'd the '*Sun*,' I would have you confined to a word called *truth*, and not tell the public that the present harvest is *prosperous*, which you have followed up *thick* and *thin*. No doubt but you are paid for your rascally information to the public; and were I to be with you I would tell you the difference. *Come here and see, you villain, to insert such a lie.*

"You ought to be dam'd, and those that gave you the information.

"GEO. TEMPLER."

From such rubbish I will transport the reader to a letter from Mr. Lisle Bowles, in which, besides the too kind estimate of me, there is a poetical illustration of general interest.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have finished my 'Last Saxon,' and probably my *last* poem. It is sent to you for your candid perusal. If it should awaken any interest in the mind of the most accurate and most unprejudiced critic of the age, I shall be indeed gratified. What is said in the preface, I think, will be sufficient to show my design. The introductory canto alludes to the various foreign subjects for poetry, whilst our history is comparatively neglected; and this canto contains also the principal characters, as in shadowy view, presented at the funeral of Harold.

"I could not well introduce the Conqueror here, but enough is said to prepare for his appearance in the second canto.

"I trust you will think all the poetic and supernatural circumstances in the poem are in consonance (I should say 'keeping') with his character, as I have tried to sketch it.

"Some allowance must be made for the difficulty of sustaining his dignity in the situation described, but I hope I have not entirely failed. The circumstances and character of Editha are new, I believe, to English poetry, though it is singular that such a fact as her finding the body of Harold, and this interesting portion of our history, should never have found a poet. I wish it had found one more able than

myself; but whether your critical opinion, after a candid perusal, be favourable or not,

"I remain, with sincere respect, dear sir, very truly,

"W. L. BOWLES."

"P.S.—I think I may venture to say, that in the diction you will find all '*Cockneyisms*' carefully avoided. William will have a better coat on Monday, but I was willing he should be introduced to you directly."

Well, the critic did his duty, and the following letter is the result, with which I beg to close this miscellaneous chapter.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I have just read the gratifying support your eloquent pen has given to my '*Last Saxon*,' and I cannot delay cordially thanking you. I am the more gratified as you have pointed out so clearly, what appeared to me obvious, that the introduction of the '*Witches*' was not needless, but in strict consonance with the cast and character given to William, and with the storms and earthquake, &c., as well as for poetical *light* and *shade*, which beings of this description give to poetical narrative. One of the critical school of Etourdi asked me, *Cui inservimus?*

"Your observations on the divided interest in the last book, are most accurate and judicious. If I have a second edition, which I think your account sufficient to promise, this will be obviated,—by detaching Marcus from that scene entirely, and if I had had the advantage of consulting any one so judicious, or indeed had myself considered it, I could not only have prevented this conflict of sympathies, in this place, but have given additional effect to the narrative, by letting Marcus stay, where history places him,

in a convent at Lewes, making the brothers and sisters pass that way to see the plain of battle, making there the discovery of their brother,—reserving the discovery of Editha for the place where it stands—Marcus chiefly distracts the interest. When I read your objections, the obvious beauty, without going from historical truth, I might have introduced, struck me so forcibly that I almost exclaimed

“ Oh ! te Bowleane, cerebri ! ”

How could I miss it ?

“ You are equally right, I think, after consideration, in what you say of the songs of Editha, not being in character. In fact, a pastoral air was designedly given to them, as relief to the storm, darkness, and supernatural ideas. I thought there was ‘ something too much of this,’ and that it wanted ‘ breaking,’ and the songs are supposed to be reminiscences of happier days. I hope to have an opportunity of showing my respect for your opinion by altering the cast of character in them.

“ With respect to the line you marked as not musical, it certainly was made as it stands designedly ; a more obvious melody would be

“ Toiling, from corse to corse, they trod in blood.”

But would this express the action, the toil, the difficulty ? I dissent in this instance only from your remarks, but with hesitation, and indeed when you consider the numerous examples of this kind of verse, you will see, I think, the propriety of it, and if not of its individual, of its relative harmony.

“ The part which I myself considered the most effective in the poem, was the introduction of William in the abbey,

and his discovery. I had never heard a syllable of the French poem on the subject.

"I am now in the corner

"*Mihi me reddentis agel—*" (*broken off by the seal*).

and all my village girls and boys in their best cloaks, are greeting our return.* Could I, can I, shall I, persuade you and Croly, and my friend Watts, to come down for a week? Nares is coming the beginning of July. Do pray turn it in your thoughts, and believe me,

"Dear sir, most sincerely your obedient servant,

"W. L. BOWLES."

"Except, when I wrote a poem anonymously, I have never had a warm word from any critic in my life, but my little boat, somehow or other, has got on, in defiance of cockney-taste or cockney-animosity, and the guarded silence of the *Duo fulmina*, the 'Quarterly, and Edinburgh.' This I attribute to the steadiness with which I hope I have steered between the Scylla and Charybdis of modern taste, false simplicity, and affected tawdriness of ornament, with with eye never removed from the models of the Greek *ἐπιγραμματα*, which I first proposed to myself as the only examples. I am prepared for something vindictive in the 'Quarterly,' of which D'Israeli of the 'golden-silvery-diamond-eye' firing 'silver-circled-silver-shining' style is the

* Mr. and Mrs. Bowles educated and clothed nearly all the poorer class of children in the parish of Bremhill. It was a most gratifying sight to see them fêted on the lawn in front of the beautiful mansion on a fine summer day. At a very short distance the Marchioness of Lansdowne was earnestly fulfilling a similar charity for the children around Bowood; and Tom Moore, at Sloperston, between the two, thus had visions of a more bountiful and better world than he had painted in his biting satires.—W. J.

Coryphæus : I hope, however, the editor will be above this revenge."

I will finish this epistolary chapter with a playful letter respecting Holland, by the author of 'Catiline' and many other excellent productions, a distinguished poet and an eloquent divine, who must not disapprove of one of the livelier sketches of earlier years being preserved to embellish the biography of a friend.

"Hague, Holland, 154, Noorde Eade."

"DEAR JERDAN,

"I suspect you of Jesuitism, enough to forge at least a date ; and that, like Bonaparte and his decrees, you manufactured a 7th of January to suit your own purposes. Take this upon your own conscience ; but *upon mine*, the gentlest oath that can be sworn in a cold climate, I believe you to be among the worst depositaries of correspondence to be found anywhere, from this to Berwick, or forward and upward to Inverness. You absolutely kept some of my epistles—that is, epistles to me—a month, and have afflicted some of my she-friends with all the horrors of being forgotten by me. May I trust you again ? I was actually beginning to have my fears for yourself ; and as a typhus fever, or a St. Vitus's dance, might seize upon a man of genius, and six feet altitude, as well as upon the diminutives of this world, I did not know but I might have been called on to write your epitaph. However, let me intreat you to sin no more on this subject, and, in consideration of your reform, I shall trouble you with sundry commissions in future. Thank you for your arrangements with the flageolet-maker—bring it with you ; but don't stir till the wind has been steadily fair for some time. You may come in twelve hours. You may be kicked about, starved.

and sickened to within an hour or two, of giving up the ghost by setting off, as I did, whether the wind would or not. You traitor!—this I use merely in tenderness—you say nothing about the poem which I must have done, but must see while it is doing in proofs. Holland is now in its glory; it has got new importation of tobacco, and a new fall of snow. They both have the effect of blinding me, and I at this instant write to you almost with one eye relieving the other. But the landscape, with all its flatness, is bright; the sun, to my astonishment and *adoration*, perpetually brilliant—a grand orb of fire and gold. The frost is severe; but exercise, clear air, and a kind of scorn of the Hollanders, who are all wrapped up to the snouts, like porcupines, in thick furs, make me never care about the cold while I can move. After all, spring is the finest time for movement here, as everywhere else; but spring here is like the people—slow, sulky, and takes a long time to consider about what might be better done at once, and what must be done, in some way or other, at last. And yet to think of having, in such a climate, drawing-rooms built without a chimney! This is my unhappy case at this moment. I am promised a chimney, made on the best authorities, with a grate with bars, and contrivance for letting the blaze be seen; but while the frost lasts, the *architect* cannot work, and in the meantime I am forced to eat, drink, dress myself—nay, *even* sleep in my bed-chamber. I am glad of the recruits coming, and request you to give my best respects to the Accouchée, or, as it is phrased in the classical tongue of this country, ‘*De Kramm Frow*.’ Apropos of Mr. F., let my letters lie open, and let him read them if he *can*; but I wish his powers were a little more extensive. Your enclosure (*i.e.*, mine) has just cost me six shillings, English.”

In another letter, near the same date, the writer (who, by-the-by, was not far, as a looker-on, from the hottest of the fire in the north of Germany when Hamburg was fought for) says, "I have been for some days (February 8) unblest with a sight of the sky. There are 'storms upon the winds and oceans in the air,' and if this wretched country is not blown clean away, it is only that it may stay to be drowned. But spring will do something kind for it again, and then you must exhibit here."

In another part he speaks thus eloquently of Malesherbes, of whose life an excellent translation had just been published:—"It is peculiarly appropriate to the moment when the world wants to be reminded of the ancient honour and nobleness that was to be found in France. Malesherbes is more like a patriot of antiquity—a great, manly, mistaken character, full of vigorous talent, and high resolution, and venerable virtue, than a Frenchman; and if the people of that country are ever to rise to their earlier rank among nations, it must be by the memory and the example of such men."

CHAPTER XX.



THE SUN NEWSPAPER.

Perhaps, "where ignorance is bliss,
'Tis folly to be wise."

Who saw the Sun to-day?
No matter.—SHAKSPEARE, *Rich. III.*

My preceding chapter may have intimated that I had become editor to some journal, of sufficient character to embrace the correspondence of distinguished literary men. In point of fact I was installed in the "Sun" newspaper, on Monday the 10th of May, 1813, and, with an interregnum of a few months in 1817, held my place in that Journal, and the "Literary Gazette," for the long space of thirty-seven years, during which period I enjoyed that intercourse and those communications, on which I rely to give interest and value to my succeeding autobiography. On the past I feel, that, though I have dwelt upon personal reminiscences to some extent, I have not pursued the subject farther than the public may approve, nor, at any rate, farther than I have declared to be necessary to develope and point the lesson of my life. On the contrary I have left many things untouched to which I hope to return in the way of illustration, and which (to confess a truth) I have only been compelled to pass over in consequence of the difficulties

of reference, which, to my astonishment, I have encountered. Truly may it be said, we live only in and for our own day. Having been as liberal in forgetting as in producing my literary labours ; not having preserved a complete copy of any publication I ever conducted, nor of any separate work I have published, though amounting to twelve or thirteen volumes ; nor of any of my contributions to the larger Reviews, Annuals, books of friendly combinations for humane purposes, or any of the multitude of minor efforts scattered about here, there, and everywhere ; I thought, on setting myself to my present undertaking, that I should no doubt have plenty to do in raking up my ashes (if there were fire in them) from the dust-holes of these neglected bantlings of the brain ; but, on coming to the retrospect, I found it was all a blank. If I had written anything deserving of resuscitation in the brilliant "Aurora," the brilliant "Aurora" had herself sunk so irretrievably into the gulph of oblivion, that one ray of her was not to be discovered. If I sought the "Pilot" for like remains, it was but to learn that this "Pilot" had not weathered the storm ; but the "Satirist," there were eight or ten octavo volumes, and these must easily be found for reference. Stop, reader ! I dare say they exist in more places than one ; but, certes, in no receptacle to which inquirers would be directed to resort for such information. The British Museum (deficient in a multitude of sterling works, or at least so catalogued as to preclude their discovery), is, as far as periodical literature is concerned, a collection of odds and ends, shreds and patches ; you may look all day ere you find them, and when found they are not worth the search. I do not think there is one perfect set of a London newspaper in the National Repository ! As for those publications which flourished for their era, be it short or long, there is

no trace of them or of their ever having been. Of provincial journals there are only few irregular fragments ; and on visiting the Chapter Coffee-house, Peele's, Deacon's, and other places, noted as the conservators of elder journalism, nothing will be met but disappointment,—the “ rubbish ” has been cleared out, and the butter it has wrapt, eaten thirty years ago, and the very trunks it lined fallen to pieces through the wear and tear of age.

Therefore, I can here only repeat that such things were, and were to me most dear ; and promise that if I can hereafter recover any morsels of them I may fancy deserving of rescue, the public, as fox-hunters say, shall have the benefit of the “ find.”

My editorship of the “ Sun,” then an acknowledged organ of Pitt politics, and ministerially informed and supported as such, was confided to me, as stated, on the 10th of May, 1813. I had a tenth share of the property, a weekly salary amounting to above 500*l.* a-year, and the “ entire control ” of the paper ; and hence great troubles and disastrous results in the sequel, when the deed of copartnery came to be construed and canvassed in the courts of law. In the beginning it was all pleasant and harmonious enough, and a curiously illustrative instance of the clearness with which literary people are apt to apprehend the nature of legal instruments and the penalties attached to a breach of them, was afforded within six weeks of our engagement by Mr. Taylor and myself. One clause in the agreement provided always, that neither of us should be bail for a third party, on pain of forfeiture ; yet, notwithstanding, and nevertheless, we went together to a spunging-house, and gave bail for a stricken associate, a Mr. Proby, Lords' reporter for the “ Morning Chronicle,” and a great oddity in his day. My immediate precursor

was Mr. Robert Clarke, a gentleman of solid intelligence and sound ability; and there was conjoined with him, for the lighter contributions of poetry, dramatic criticism, chit-chat news, &c., the aforesaid notable Mr. John Taylor, of Monsieur Tonson repute, one of the most prolific punsters and amusing convivial companions of the time. He also held a tenth share—the remaining eight being still retained by Mr. George Heriot and Mr. Clarke. Thus situated, I commenced my daily labours, proud of the position I had achieved, and resolute in the ardent Toryism I had inherited from my father, nourished in the “Morning Post,” and augmented by my new connexion.

“*Sol tibi signa dabit!*”

I proclaimed, and—

“*Solem quis dicere falsum
Audeat?*”

I printed on my shield, just as if I were endowed with capacity to instruct and lead the whole world, and as if it would be a perilous feat to question my authority. It was like the Dixie family motto, *Quid dixi dixi* (what I have said, I have said), which some wit translated and applied to a blustering scion of the race, “What Dixie has lied about, Dixie will swear to;” and though I certainly intended no falsehood, I was pretty well prepared to stick to my text, whatever it might be; adding,—

“*Ille etiam cæcos instare tumultus,
Sæpe monet, fraudemq’ et operta tumescere tecta.*”

It was an eventful period. Napoleon was pursuing his victories in Germany, and Wellington, like the lion couchant, preparing for his immortal spring, for the deliverance of

Spain ; and almost every sun witnessed circumstances of immense interest and magnitude, which it was my duty to record and comment upon. My first "leader" was on the anniversary of the death of Mr. Perceval, the firm antagonist to the Roman Catholics, which at this period was warmly debated in Parliament. Of course I took the Protestant opposition side, and wrote so well, that the "Sun" was publicly stigmatised and burnt by the Romish party in Dublin.

I do not look back on all, what I may call my political career, with unmitigated satisfaction ; for, in the heat of argument, and, I must add, in the deep conviction of national injury being perpetrated by opposite opinions and acts, one is apt to become more violent in condemnation than ordinary circumstances could warrant ; and even personal, in the belief that there must be corrupt or bad motives on the other side. Time assuages this fury, and mitigates this rancour ; and we think of the fierceness of the strife, and the hatred of the suspicions, with a considerable change in feeling and judgment. But when I now calmly consider my writings in the "Sun" to the end of the year (1813), I am bold to say that I find more to be proud of than to repent.

That I fervently, and with all my might, plunged armed to the teeth among the ranks of the opposition, and almost daily made bitter attacks upon their organ, the "Morning Chronicle," and its editor, Mr. James Perry, is no subject of regret. In after years Mr. Perry and I lived together in social kindness, and I had ceased to think that he had been sold to the worst and most dangerous enemy of his country, or was a desperate revolutionist aiming at its destruction. I could believe that he was merely the tool and mouthpiece of his party, and meant nothing unpatriotic

in using every means to push them into place and power. Engaged in such designs no one sees very clearly to the right or left, or weighs very impartially the pros and cons of the case. In short the mind is warped, the perceptions obscured, and to accomplish the end in view the single occupation of the newspaper ally.

But no distance of time can erase from my memory the indignation and disgust I experienced in daily dissecting the ruinous tendencies of the opposition tactics, as they regarded the war in the Peninsula. I am convinced that the hottest politicians now living as the heirs to their sentiments could read the parliamentary debates of 1813 without shame and contrition.* It seemed as if, between terror and admiration, they had exalted Buonaparte into an idol, and would rush through the fire to worship their Moloch, colouring every advantage on his side, and disparaging every success against him. No wonder that the ministerial phalanx shouted and exulted with triumph when the tide turned against the mighty conqueror. I crowed with the rest when Wellington victoriously entered Madrid, and (July 1st) scouted with scorn the "Chronicle" opinion, that it was "nothing but a renewal of the policy of Buonaparte to protract the contest in Spain until a more favourable opportunity occurs of carrying it into effect." I laughed at the prediction, that the hero "having finished the war in the north," would be "enabled to send a force to the Peninsula strong enough to compel Lord Wellington again to retreat, and once more leave the enemy the undisputed occupancy of the greater part of Spain!" But, indeed, we had the argument all our own way now, and

* It is worthy of remark that in the publication of the Wellington Dispatches, the Duke himself complains of these debates and newspaper comments as *currish*, and calculated to embarrass his Commissariat, and defeat his measures.

recurred with grand gusto to the gloomy prediction about the leopard's being driven into the sea, and the gloomier wish that Wellington and his brave army were only safe at home. After this date the downfall of Napoleon from his dazzling height was a wonder to behold, and accompanied by a continual succession of such astonishing and terrible events as no other era in the world's history can parallel. There were not many nights on which the evening newspapers did not publish second, third, and even fourth and fifth editions, with the extraordinary news brought by every arrival from the continent, which was in one sanguinary ferment from the Tagus to the Vistula ; and, as I have acknowledged, We were not particularly moderate in boasting of our prescience, our patriotism, our glorious deeds, and our resplendent victory. The "Chronicle" characterised the "Sun" as a "paper peculiarly resorted to by ministers for the propagation of their ideas ;" and I presume, therefore, that every class of politicians in the British Isles will agree that I could not do less nor otherwise than I have stated. And I did it in verse as well as in prose : here is proof.

A BRACE OF OPPOSITION SIMILES.

CUR! cur!

You must have seen, pray han't you Sir?

In London streets, a yelping cur,

In trust of waggon proud :

Trampling the bales of goods below,

Barking at crowds who near him go,

Snarling, and racing to and fro,

Busy, offensive, loud.

Of office insolently vain,

He snaps, and growls, and snaps again—

A plague to all around ;

And yet with all this battling stout,

Of what he really is about,

And worth of charge which prompts this rout,

In ignorance profound.

A cur, you may have seen beside,
 To axle-tree by cord fast tied,
 Beneath a cart, God wot ;
 The string about his neck he feels,
 He twists, he writhes, he pulls, he reels,
 And wheels about between the wheels,
 Compelled along to trot.

Like vanquished slave in ancient war,
 Chained to the spoke of Victor's car,
 A triumph to adorn ;
 His dreary howl ascends the sky,
 Amid the shouts of victory,
 No sharer in the general cry,
 But wretched and forlorn.

Thus 'tis that "all the talent" crew,
 Appear presented to our view
 A currish-tempered race ;
 Barking and yelping with the best,
 Snarling and biting without rest,
 To all, and to themselves a pest,
 When raised aloft to place.

Tearing about, so loud of voice,
 So pert, and prodigal of noise,
 And self-importance too !
 Spoiling the goods beneath their care,
 Yet bustling, chaffing, here and there,
 Though impotent to guard the ware,
 Or real service do.

And so again did they appear,
 Tied to the cart (their proper sphere),
 Unwilling tugged along ; -
 With all their backward jerks so hard
 Its progress trying to retard,
 With filth their fate, scorn their reward,
 In struggling with the strong.

And now when victory's acclaim,
 To glory gives Britannia's name,
 In notes which mount to heaven !
 Still, like the cur, their helpless fate
 They mourn, while all the land's elate,
 And, wretched, grace their rivals' state
 In pomp of triumph driven.

On with the car they must proceed,
 Strengthless to leave it, or impede
 The splendid course it rolls ;

Reluctant, howling, stubborn, slow,
With joy they mix their screams of woe,
And that good men with transports glow,
Embitters more their souls!

After this I hope none will deny that I was a hearty partisan, and spared neither rhyme nor reason to sustain the cause to which I vehemently and conscientiously adhered.

In looking over this chapter I have caught the notion that it has more of a political tinge than I intend my biography to exhibit; and therefore I will get over another passage, of cognate character, though the periodical press is its prominent theme. It is a declaration of my principles a few weeks after I joined the "Sun," and I copy it because I have never swerved from these principles in any of my writings, and I uphold them to be the true elements of the true Press:—

"We wish the British nation to be informed of the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; making allowance always for the mistakes into which a public print may occasionally fall, or the impositions to which even the most guarded are casually exposed. Little consistent with this principle is the vain desire of making a stir by the circulation of news of which the next day proves the utter fallacy; and still less consistent with it is the abominable practice of lending the aid of that which ought to be more honest, to promote the sordid purposes of gambling and stock-jobbing. To such designs the 'Sun' shall never be prostituted. It shall be our pride to communicate the earliest intelligence, but we will not impose upon credulity by committing the character of this paper to that which is not authentic, for the paltry and (we should imagine in the end) self-injurious eclat of causing a momentary bustle, by

M 2

filling the horns of the news-boys. Neither shall this publication ever, knowingly, be made the vehicle for stamping erroneous impressions on the public mind.

“ Did our inclinations lean this way, our judgment would correct them, for we can conceive nothing more mischievous than to raise and depress the opinion of the country beyond what the real situation of the facts warrant. Deceptions, like bad fire-arms, invariably recoil ; sometimes they burst, and destroy the agent. If the news is bad, in God’s name let the English nation know it to its full extent ; they possess sufficient philosophy to hear the worst manfully, and have shown by firmness and perseverance under twenty years of pressure and difficulty, that they can face danger and overcome calamity ; if, on the contrary, the intelligence is of a favourable nature, it wants no exaggeration, for temperance and equanimity in a people are more to be coveted than a too sanguine temperament, which lays the foundation for future disappointments, or the excitement of hopes so little consonant to reason, as to be certain of grievous frustration hereafter.”

CHAPTER XXI.

SUN ANECDOTES.

I wooed thee, I wooed thee, my love,
For charms more endearing than speak
In thy soft beaming eye—like the dove—
Or the exquisite grace of thy cheek.
For a heart by each feeling refined,
And pure as a seraph's above ;
For the beauty and grace of thy mind,
I wooed thee, I wooed thee, my love.—CHARLES SWAIN.

THE responsibilities and anxieties of a newspaper editor are very onerous ; but there are often entertaining incidents to variegate the toiling tenour of his way, and generally a circle of friends and associates to animate and assist him. In an evening paper the opportunities for this sort of useful and agreeable society were (perhaps are) tempting and welcome. About two o'clock the sheet has gone to press, and there ensues two or three hours of light work and leisure, to see that something is ready for the morrow, all right for the day, and pay due attention to every novelty which might spring up and demand an improved edition. I am not aware of what alterations railroads and electric telegraphs may have caused, but forty years ago much important information was wont to reach London in the course of the afternoon. The evening journals were, of course, on the *qui vive* for such arrivals ; and it may surprise many readers to be told that frequently a single French newspaper,

smuggled over, in spite of the continental non-intercourse policy, would be brought for sale, about three or four o'clock, and ten, twenty, a hundred guineas paid for it, if the date was recent, and it contained any fresh accounts or bulletins of Buonaparte's German campaigns.* Of the importance of the news thus obtained, an idea may be formed from the annexed note :—

“ Mr. Goulburn presents his compliments to Mr. Jordan, and is extremely obliged to him for the very interesting and satisfactory information contained in the ‘ Sun ’ of this evening, of which Government had not received any information from other quarters.

“ Downing-street, October 8th, 1813.”

A second note, from the same official hand, is to the same effect :—

“ Downing-street, Nov. 27th, 1813.

“ SIR,—

“ As your paper has usually the earliest and most correct intelligence from North America, I trouble you with this note, in order to ascertain whether you have received any information respecting the defeat of General Proctor, mentioned in to-day's ‘ Chronicle.’ If you have, I should be much obliged to you to let me know the particulars.

“ Your obedient servant,

“ HENRY GOULBURN.”

“ I enclose the substance of a despatch, which will appear in the ‘ Gazette ’ of to-night.”

* The bulletins of the German Campaign were peculiarly perplexing and difficult to follow. Places were often mentioned of which no one had any previous knowledge; and many a time were the largest maps in the Foreign Office spread upon the floor, and Mr. Under Secretary and I might be seen by the hour together, crawling over them on knees and elbows, endeavouring to trace out the marches and positions of Buonaparte.

Seeing the papers had intelligence of this sort, it may readily be imagined that the privileged few who had access to their interior were almost in the daily habit of seeking an "idle" half-hour's lounge with the editor, after the imperative business of the day was over. Thus my room was hardly ever void of company from the time the first wet sheet impression of the "Sun" came down from the printing "chapel" above; and there was no lack of topics on which to give and receive information. Among my most constant visitors were Mr. (Sir Francis) Freeling, John Kemble, Robert Clarke, Mr. Fladgate, and the Mr. Proby I have already mentioned as a singular character. Proby had never been out of London, never in a boat, never on the back of a horse. To the end of bag-wigs he wore a bag; he was the last man that walked with a cane as long as himself, ultimately exchanged for an umbrella, which he was never seen without in wet weather or dry; yet he usually reported the whole debates in the Peers from memory, without a note, for the "Morning Chronicle," and wrote two or three novels, depicting the social manners of the times! He was a strange feeder, and ruined himself in eating pastry at the confectioners' shops (for one of whose scores Taylor and I bailed him as related); he was always in a perspiration, whence George Colman christened him "King Porus;" and he was always so punctual to a minute, that when he arrived in sight of the office window, the hurry used to be, "There's Proby—it is half-past two," and yet he never set his watch. If ever it came to right time I cannot tell; but if you asked him what o'clock it was, he would look at it, and calculate something in this sort—"I am twenty-six minutes past seven—four, twenty-one from twelve, forty—it is just three minutes past three!"

Poor, strange, and simple, yet curiously-informed Proby, his last domicile was the Lambeth parish workhouse, out of which he would come in its coarse grey garb, and call upon his friends as freely and uncereemoniously as before, to the surprise of servants, who entertain "an 'orrid" jealousy of paupers, and who could not comprehend why a person so clad was shown in. The last letter I had from him spoke exultingly of his having been chosen to teach the young children in the house their A B C, which conferred some extra accommodations upon him, and thanking me for my share in the subscription of a few pounds a-year, which those who knew him in happier days put together to purchase such comforts as his humble situation could admit.

Among the pleasures of newspaper procurement, I may, hereabouts, mention the acquaintance of Madame de Staël, who was far from handsome or attractive, and an almost incessant talker; though, perhaps, the excuse ought to be made, that in London society everybody endeavoured to "draw her out."

The grand Vittoria festival in Vauxhall Gardens, was also an enjoyment in its way, and especially to the advocates for the policy thus triumphant and honoured. I sat next Mr. Hume at the dinner-table, and the *fête* altogether was certainly one of the most public-spirited and joyous that I have ever seen. The illuminated V.'s and W.'s were very brilliant, and the jest was made of one Cockney asking another what the letters meant, and receiving for answer, "Vy, the V.'s stand for Vellington, and the W.'s for Wictory, to be sure."

It is whimsical to observe how, as the wheel of time revolves, the same kind of things appear to be repeated, or come up anew. Thus, in 1813, we have Lord Darnley and the Lord Chancellor bitterly complaining of the inclement

temperature and ventilation of the House of Lords ; and I meet with a droll notice of Jerome Buonaparte, then King of Westphalia, of whom so little has been heard from that date till now, when appointed President of the French Senate.

After his greater brother's defeat at Leipsic, the German press ran riot in taunts and mockery, and one of them advertised King Jerome as having embezzled money and deserted. For his apprehension, the citizens of Cassel offer 10,000 centimes reward ; and give the following " Description of the culprit : " — " Jerome, aged 29 years, of low stature, an awkward figure, diseased and debilitated by excesses, sallow complexion, blear and hollow-eyed, down-cast look, middle-sized nose, and pointed prominent chin, and particularly remarkable for the harshness of his voice and indistinctness of his speech. At the time of his absconding he wore a white coat with blue collar and cuffs, and epaulettes of false gold, a short white waistcoat and buckskin breeches, large old cocked hat, and newly-goloshed boots with sherry-yellow tassels." Jerome has outlived his debilitated constitution a number of years, and it would only be curious to trace now in Paris what remains there may be of the likeness of the German caricature !

By an odd occurrence, my path was again crossed by my former acquaintance, Mrs. Mary Ann Clarke. The publisher of the " Satirist," one Williams, had been tampered with, to publish from the office a pamphlet which contained a libellous attack upon the character of Mr. W. Fitzgerald, the Chancellor of the Irish Exchequer. On discovering this act of treachery I lost no time in writing to Mr. Fitzgerald, and informing him of all I could ascertain about the matter, and the unwarrantable conduct of my servant ; to which communication I received the annexed answer :—

"Great George-street, April 7, 1813."

"SIR,

"I have to thank you for the publication which you were so good as to send to me. I assure you I am highly sensible of the motives which have induced you to express yourself in the manner you have done, on the subject to which you have alluded, as well as those honourable feelings which actuated you in the disavowal of so infamous a libel as that which was sent forth from the 'Satirist' office.

"From my own knowledge, however, I can state that the account given by Mr. Williams, the publisher of that pamphlet, is not correct. As to that, however, I am indifferent, hoping still that the laws will be strong enough to vindicate themselves, and to protect me.

"I feel very much obliged to you for the manner in which you have been pleased to express yourself respecting myself, and

"I am, Sir,

"Your obedient and very humble servant,

"WILLIAM FITZGERALD."

About a week after, the lady was arrested upon a judge's warrant, and conveyed to a sponging-house in Warwick-court, Holborn, to which I was invited to see if any accommodation of the business could be devised. Here I found Mrs. Clarke in exuberant spirits, mocking at all consequences, and as usual making the best of the passing hour. Her landlord, she told me, was called Poker Wilson, in memory of his having killed a prisoner, who was attempting to escape, with that utensil; and, therefore, she was quite safe, and sure of protection; and I was formally introduced to this formidable officer, a short, thick, squat, fellow, with every semblance of being capable of the deed he had done. In the end, Mary Ann got out of the scrape

with less scathe than she had reason to fear; her sex standing her in good stead, for libels in those days were grave offences, and severely punished as such. Yet she had a sentence of nine months in the Marshalsea; from which gaol, as soon as she took up her residence, she issued cards, "Mrs. M. A. Clarke At Home every Evening till farther notice." For a libel on Lord St. Vincent my friends in the "Sun" had been convicted *en masse*, and one inconvenient afternoon, just as the paper was about ready to go to press, the bailiffs walked in, and walked off Mr. Heriot, the editor, to six months' imprisonment in the King's Bench Prison; Carstairs, the printer, and Mr. Scripps, the publisher, to one month, and required Mr. Taylor to pay the fine of a hundred marks, which puzzled the dramatic critic not a little, for though far more conversant with the stage than with actual life (much as he mixed with it), he had no notion what a mark was, and where he could get any to pay his fine withal. He knew more about Romeo Coates, at this time at his theatrical zenith, and about all the gossip of the coulisses, and the movements of the player-kings and queens from Elsinour, or elsewhere. And this reminds me of a little love affair, in the agency of which I was interested, and the secret of which, after the lapse of so many years, may, without impropriety, be whispered to the public, especially as it in no way compromises the principal parties, who were no less distinguished than the Secretary, Mr. Hiley Addington, and Miss Stephens, now Countess Dowager of Essex. Little could Canning surmise when assailing the "Doctor" (Lord Sidmouth) with his keen shafts of wit, and invoking his adherents to sustain him—

Praise him, O praise him, brother Bragg!
Praise him, O praise him, brother Hiley!—

little could he surmise that brother Hiley was also a poet, and, inspired by the tender passion, could cap verses almost as well as himself. But so it was, and we have the pleasure of adding one more to the list of noble and right honourable authors.

Miss Stephens had made her successful *débüt*, and at once charmed all ears, and captivated all hearts by her rich melodious notes, sweetly simple looks, and modestly becoming demeanour. Among the most deeply smitten was Mr. Addington, and it was upon the occasion of a sudden illness with which the fair object of his adoration was seized, that he poured forth the following impassioned composition, to the popular Vocalist of "Adieu thou Dreary Pile," and many a beautiful native English composition besides :—

TO MISS STEPHENS.

A RHAPSODY.

WHITHER when doubts or fears molest,
By grief subdued, by toil oppress,
For solace shall I fly?
What charm shall each sad hour beguile?
The music of what voice—what smile—
The magic of what eye?
Enchantress sweet, I turn to thee,
'Tis thine alone my thoughts to free
From each devouring care.
But ah! whilst those which I endure
Thou, only thou, canst chase or cure,
Thou plant'st another there.
Angelic maid—how much 'tis thine,
With touch of melody divine,
To soothe the troubled heart!
Thine o'er the soul full sway to gain,
With chasten'd note and melting strain,
Beyond the reach of art.
But thus, while music's power I own,
Sweet songstress, 'tis not that alone
Which ravishes each sense;
That sparkling look, that speaking eye,
In whose soft radiance I descry
The soul of innocence;

That cherub smile, chaste Cynthia's tread,
That coral lip of virgin red,
 Ne'er yet by mortal press'd ;
In native modesty array'd,
These charms conspire with music's aid,
 To fire my throbbing breast.

When this thy earthly course is o'er,
Sure Heaven, with future bliss in store,
 Shall bid thy spirit rise ;
Design'd then from thy earliest birth,
To charm—a syren here on earth—
 A seraph in the skies !

The writer was in deep distress and much alarm at the period these lines appeared in the "Sun," November 2nd, 1813 ; and in a note from him, dated Harley-street, the 4th, he expatiates on the fair lady's "great merit," as an irresistible claim to this "just tribute," and adds, "How Miss S. is this morning I have not yet heard. She was senseless above half an hour. Yours very truly, J. H. A." Fortunately for the public, the poet's prayers were heard, and the delicious vocalist restored to health and the stage, of which she continued one of the purest and brightest ornaments till raised to the aristocratic eminence which she has equally adorned. Farther than the insertion of this specimen of poetry, of my attention to which the writer expressed himself, in a note of thanks, "extremely sensible," and explaining the circumstances on which it was founded, I have perhaps no mission to proceed ; but I may state the impression on my mind to be, that it formed part of a correspondence and intercourse with Miss Stephens, which would have led to her being Mrs. Addington, had she inclined to view the offers made to her with favour and acceptance. Lady Essex may remember, among her numerous conquests, whether this was so or not !

As a pendant wherewith to close this semi-poetic chapter, I cannot do better than quote one of the thousand-and-one

jeux d'esprit, which have been thrown loosely, like my own, to the press by my old comrade Mr. Gaspey, the author of the "Lollards," "Calthorpe," the "Witch-Finder," and I know not how many other tomes and miscellaneous heaps. It may be remembered that the first mere report that Lord Wellington had fought a great battle near Saint Sebastian's was brought home by the "Sparrow," which stated that she had left the "Fancy" at Corunna, waiting to bear the dispatches; and that a week of intense national anxiety ensued before the official or any other account was received. It was in the midst of this breathless public feeling that Mr. Gaspey published the annexed neat, and happily prophetic, epigram—

"You peevish old churl!" cried Britannia, inflamed,
To Neptune, while anxious she looked o'er the sea;
"My Wellington's fought, and you might be ashamed
To keep thus the tidings of glory from me."

"Bright goddess," he answer'd, "O blame not in thought
Old Neptune, who glories in seeing you blest.
By a Sparrow I sent word the hero had fought,
And to Fancy I thought I might well leave the rest."

CHAPTER XXII.

PARIS IN 1814.

'Tis light and air again ; and lo ! the Seine,
 Yon boasted, lazy, lurid, fetid drain !
 With paper booths and painted trees o'erlaid,
 Baths, blankets, wash-tubs, every thing but trade.

Around our way-laid wheels the paupers crowd,
 Naked, contagious, cringing, and yet proud.
 The whole a mass of folly, filth, and strife,
 Of heated, rank, corrupting reptile life.

PARIS IN 1815. CROLY.

THE year 1813 departed amid such an extraordinary dense atmosphere, that its *vale* was truly written—

Eighteen hundred and thirteen, I bid you adieu,
 In the dark to eternity jog ;
 Before you took leave you had got out of view,
 And now you are lost in a fog.

A bright beam, however, shot through the mist of the theatrical sphere in its successor ; for on the 27th of January, Kean made his *début* at Drury Lane in “Shylock,” and produced an immense sensation, which was kept up by various means, as well as by his extraordinary talent, for a number of succeeding years. I witnessed his first appearance, and was much struck by those qualities which were afterwards more fully developed in “Richard the Third,” “Othello,” and other characters suited to his *physique* and

genius, and partially distinguished in his less triumphant parts of "Romeo," "Hamlet," "Lear," and others.

The famous Frost Fair on the Thames, when sheep were roasted, or rather scorched, whole on the ice ; and printing-presses did their best for the ready, useless, and popular authorship of the day—as if there were not always ice and coldness enough in the world for authors of every sort—also took place this season ; and the public was fleeced by the productions on both sides, which were rather dear, though sold cheap. The ice, fortunately, did not last long enough to create a new literature, like the railroads in our time.

The British Institution for the exhibition, sale, and reward of works of Art asserted its important mission in a way to fix and raise it in universal estimation, and it was my pleasing task (on which I look back with unmitigated satisfaction) to commence that course of especial attention to the subject of the Fine Arts, and the merits of our native school, in which I never ceased to exert my utmost power during the six-and-thirty years that have since elapsed, and whilst I held the pen of a periodical writer in publications of sufficient authority to guide the judgment and influence the taste of the country. In this respect I fear not the accusation of egotism ; but as I shall have to speak more at large on the matter, at a later period, I will now only invite my readers to look at the relation of the press to our national arts, and the condition of the latter before I began and set the example of this practice, and their positions in the present day : forty years ago they hardly obtained an occasional and scanty notice, and in 1852 there is no species of publicity that is not accorded to them. There is, no doubt, much of ignorance and folly mixed up with the innovation, but altogether it has a very material tendency to foster the arts and benefit artists.

The famous stock-jobbing hoax helped to enliven the home circles ; but Buonaparte was not dead though its contrivers said he was, yet driven to his last resources, and finally compelled to resign his imperial crown, and assume the less prominent regalia of Elba ; an account of which island, by the by, I afterwards published in an octavo volume, now, I dare say, " scarce," at least, I have not a copy, nor do I know where to get one.* I shall have to beg the favour of my friends in " Notes and Queries " to help me to repair some of my vacuities, should the appearance of this volume fail to stir up the kindness of other friends to the " Articles Wanted."

Yet though Napoleon was alive his dominion was over, and France was opened to the incursions of every description of travellers, and a rush was made to see the country which had been all but hermetically sealed against English footsteps and English eyes since the rupture of the truce (peace ?) of Amiens. It may readily be imagined that the conductor of a ministerial newspaper must have had an irresistible vocation to visit Paris ; and, by the favour of my friend, Mr. Freeling, I secured the earliest passage, by the first regular packet, the " Lady Francis," in which I sailed from Dover on the 19th of April, leaving Mr. Robert Clarke my able *locum tenens* in the glorifying " Sun ! " Two days later Buonaparte quitted Fontainebleau for his destination, and I was disappointed in my object to see the conquered Conqueror about whom I had written and printed so much, ever opposing his hostility, and ever hoping (and ultimately predicting) his fall. Strange was it, and is it, to me that the adherence to him among Englishmen should

* Voyage to the Isle of Elba, by W. Jerdan, from the French of Arsenne de Berneaud, who had recently visited the Island, dedicated to Mr. Charles Long. June, 1814. Longman & Co.

ever have existed, and stranger still that it should have lasted to his overthrow, survived that disaster, and revived with his return from the Island to which he was banished at this time. To such unaccountable and pertinacious partizanship—it was nothing less—a sort of key may be supplied by a whimsical anecdote, in which self-interest seemed to outweigh patriotism. On the day when Napoleon's escape from Elba and landing in France was made known in London, I was leaving my office in the Strand, about 5 o'clock, having struck off some second and third editions, as used formerly to be the case, till the lack of interesting news caused the custom to drop. At the door I was accosted by a pale, meagre fellow, who looked as if he had blown away all his pith and strength through the horn he held in his hand, without a return in the shape of provision or gin to recruit them, but who was shouting at the top of all the voice he had left, and laughing as if he had drawn a prize in the lottery. I recognised one of our old customers, in the thriving and merry multiple-edition times, and he came up to me, offering his dirty digits to shake, and exclaiming, "hurra, sir, thank Heaven! our old friend Bonny's got loose again: there'll be rare fun: hurra! old Bonny for ever! hurra!" The only excuse I can offer for this patriot is, that he was evidently half seas over. But to revert to my Paris trip.

On the shore at Dover I witnessed an incident which would have inspired Sterne with an exquisite picture of sentiment, but which, as mine was not a sentimental journey, I shall merely notice. A beautiful young lady, apparently little more, if more, than twenty years of age, was landed from the opposite coast from a boat; and the moment she touched free British ground, she threw herself on her knees upon it, literally embraced it with her outstretched arms, and amid a flood of tears breathed blessings upon it

and the hour which had restored her, after eleven years absence and captivity in a foreign land. What the circumstances were, I could not know, but they must have been remarkable to excite such overwhelming emotions, and demonstrate at least that our fair countrywoman had no cause to be a Buonapartist admirer.

The landing at Calais was a novelty and a treat, and the journey to Paris in a hired cabriolet, from M. Quillacq, of Dessein's Hotel (hire 100 francs) as widely different from the present mode as if centuries had elapsed. The name of Buonaparte was, generally, most irreverently and even abusively mentioned by all classes, whose motives I do not seek to investigate, but simply state the fact; only venturing to hint that the expected influx of English money, the desire to please English visitors, the real feeling of a release from oppression, a wish for peace, a love of change, the presence of foreign troops in larger or smaller numbers throughout the provinces, and above all, the detestation of the conscription, which had drained the people to the last extremity, might contribute, altogether, to the rejoicing with which the great change in the national system was hailed. It is strictly true that on the entire road from Calais to Paris, I hardly met or saw, any men in the prime of life, except the postillions who drove us—all had been torn away by the ruthless requisitions of war: old men, women, and children, were performing every work of husbandry and business, and yet the hedgeless lands seemed to be teeming with plenty, the corn crops rich and promising, the trees fruitful, the farm produce of poultry, eggs, and vegetables abundant, but no show of cattle or sheep, and but for the absence of the male population and the severe labour imposed on women, who were literally doing the work of the horses consumed in warfare, everything wearing a smile of

prosperity. The human race alone was desolate ; for all "the flowers of the forest were weeded away." In other respects the country differed little from the description of a hundred years ago, though the beggars were much more numerous and miserable ; and one could not surmise whence either these bands of mendicants,—the crippled, the blind, the wounded, and the worn-out—or the work-people, came from ; for there was between the towns only a succession of fields as wide as Salisbury Plain, and no appearance of habitations for those who were cultivating them.

From Boulogne to the capital was one exhibition of white flags ; and Russian and Prussian troops were scattered about the famous invasion tower, from which the English shores had been contemplated with many a wistful look ! Travelling and changing horses through a very cold night, my companion a French gentleman, we breakfasted at Beauvais, and at 6 p.m., thirty-six hours from Calais, arrived at Paris. On the route near Noilles and its fine ancient chateau, and between that place and the capital, I met or passed Russian or Prussian regiments : in one instance, where a body of Prussian Lancers proceeding to the coast, and about an equal number of French Guards on their way to Paris, to take the duty of receiving Louis XVIII., happened to cross each other on the road, I observed that not a salute was exchanged, and they passed each other in utter silence. A little beyond Beauvais I encountered the first Cossack I saw in France. He was riding alone with his spear in the rest, patrolling in fearless security a central province of ancient France. Hence, not only had every town and village its quota of military quartered on it, but almost every hut on the way-side lodged a quondam hostile and now victorious tenant ; and bearded natives of the Steppes and mail-clad cuirassiers

of every clime were seen parading the fertile fields and luxuriant orchards of the Oise.

The road into Paris lay partly through the battle-scene of Montmartre, where the possession of the capital was conquered, and the allies achieved the reward of all their arduous struggles. The vestiges of the cannonade were still visible ; and, here and there, lay a dead horse or two, which there had not been time to bury ; but the so lately blood-stained soil, encumbered with the mutilated corpses of the slain, seemed as green and fresh as if its pastoral quiet had never been broken by the loud artillery, or the cannon dragged over the slippery ground, the traces of which the plough and harrow were now effacing. The windmills on the heights were waving their industrious arms, and the chanson of the peasants below rang delightfully, where the strife of mortal combat had covered the maternal earth with carnage, and poisoned the heavenly air with dying groans.

The Faubourg of St. Denis exhibited more unmistakable marks of the recent conflict. Like Soult at Toulouse, Marmont protracted the defence of Paris almost beyond the limits of pardon, when it, at last, after the storming of Montmartre and Belleville, lay prostrate at the mercy of the allied conquerors. Happily for humanity and the inhabitants, the battery and palisades, which I saw still remaining in force by the gate of St. Denis, and commanding the road by which an enemy would approach, were never manned or defended by the troops, which had disputed the advance, at every favourable point, for thirty long miles, and caused no inconsiderable loss to the allies, whilst their own good positions saved them from commensurate retribution. Had this last position been disputed, Paris would have been stormed and sacked ; as it was, nothing but the moderation of the victors, and

especially, as it was understood, of the Emperor Alexander, saved it from being given up to pillage and massacre. By this gate Russian sentinels admitted our cabriolet into the city ; in the very streets and houses of which individuals were killed by random and accidental shots, fired in the closing cannonade of the 30th of March. At Lafitte's banking-house I was told of persons thus slain in the neighbourhood. The delusions of the vanquished had been kept up to the last hour ; and it was only on the 31st of the month, when the dreaded Cossacks were seen trotting about everywhere, and looking out for the "harvest" they had anticipated from the distant view of the "City of Gold," i.e., the gilded dome of the Hôtel des Invalides, that the inhabitants were made completely sensible of the fact, that their armies had been beaten and dispersed, their ruler compelled to quit the country, and themselves and their property under other rule.

But they are a gay and giddy people ; and, to say the truth, in less than two days, seemed to care nothing about the change, but rather to enjoy the novel sights that filled up every hour, with an increased and increasing relish. One emperor appeared as good as another to them. The Russian autocrat was a general favourite ; but I witnessed the horses taken from the Emperor Francis of Austria's carriage by the populace, and his Majesty drawn by Parisians to the Odéon theatre ! Between the Prussians and the French the fiercest animosity prevailed ; and it was often difficult to keep parties of them from daggers drawing, when they encountered each other in public. Terms of contempt and hatred were bandied about, and the Pruss would spit disdainfully, so as almost to alight upon the passing Frenchman. Quarrels by day and assassinations by night were frequent ; and one remarkable affair, of

which I was an eye-witness, deserves to be recorded as an anecdote of this extraordinary era, and of the wonderful congregation of human beings from every quarter of the globe, with whom Paris was crowded during its busy carnival. At one of the tables at Verrey's three foreign officers had dined, and were sipping their wine, when three French gentlemen arrived, and seated themselves at the adjoining table. It was evident, from the expression of their countenances, that there must have been some preceding feud, and that they had come to the place with no complimentary or civil intentions. In short, they had hardly called for a bottle of wine, when one of them, addressing his companions, and holding up several decorations on his breast, observed, in the most sneering tone and malignant manner, "This I received for Jena; this I got for Austerlitz; and this for Borodino! Aha!" No notice was taken of this bravado aside, and the chagrined hero of so many distinctions, not caring to offend the military police under which Paris was governed, by a more direct insult, called for his bill and rose with his friends to depart. To my astonishment I observed one of the foreigners, who gnashed his teeth and flashed fury from his eyes, start up and rush to the bar, where having placed himself, he waited the egress of the other party, and as soon as the speaker came within arm's length, struck him a violent blow on the cheek with his open hand, exclaiming, "that for Jena;" a second blow followed on the other cheek, and "that for Austerlitz" accompanied the stroke; a third, and "that for Borodino" finished the assault, which did not occupy ten seconds. Great confusion ensued, and the café was nearly cleared in a wild and hasty way, which I and my companions could not comprehend; but the mystery was soon explained. In less than half an hour the foreigners

returned to finish their wine ; a duel had been fought behind the Palais Royal, and the unfortunate Frenchman had been run through the body, and killed on the spot !

About twenty or twenty-five letters containing my Journal of Parisian events, were printed in the "Sun," during the ensuing months, under the signature of "Viator," and something of this encounter was stated, the truth of which a Paris paper ventured to question ; but there could not be a doubt of the fact ; and there were other acts of violence and bloodshed covered by darkness, which would have added fearfully to the mass of evils which deformed society (kept smooth on the surface) had they been permitted to see the light. The Morgue, and its suicidal and murdered tenants, every morning told a terrible tale of the effects of the gaming-houses, and the "allied occupation" within the twenty-four hours preceding.

Having mentioned the gaming-tables, I may observe that the veteran Blucher was one of their most assiduous nightly attendants. Attired in a rusty black coat and old blue trousers, with no order but the common iron cross of the soldiery on his breast, and sometimes without that, he would sit down and lose rouleau after rouleau of gold, giving his moustache a twist and trying another venture. He appeared to be invariably a victim ; and so far, France was revenged of his mortal hostility.

And again, having mentioned orders, I must relate the *mot* ascribed to the Duke of Wellington, and circulated at this time. Blucher's hatred of the country and its people was so intense, that he would not use the language in conversation, and absolutely refused the illustrious honour of the Holy Ghost, with which the grateful King Louis was anxious to decorate him. The Duke endeavoured to persuade the Marshal to accept the distinction, but he obstinately refused,

and at last said, pettishly, "If I received it where the d—— could I hang it? I have so many stars and medals already in front, that I have no place to put it but on my *back*." "Well," replied his Grace, "put it there, and I'll be bound it will be where no enemy will ever hit it!" But the Prussians were very inveterate, and never ceased recalling the shameful conduct of Buonaparte to their Queen. Paris would have fared ill if they had had it all their own way; yet they yielded a little to the moderating counsels and wishes of their allies. The bridge of Jena was mined, and had a narrow escape from being blown into the air, as a punishment for its name; and when the Gallery of the Louvre was criticised preparatory to the restoration of its splendid spoils to their lawful owners (now the scale was turned), it was a marvel to find what a capital judge of paintings Blucher had become, and what a memory he had of the whereabouts he had seen many of the finest; for he claimed one after another, for Berlin, Potsdam, Sans Souci, &c. &c., and clapt a sentinel within the frames of the largest, to pace up and down on that short walk, till they could be taken away and sent to their proper homes. He was prevailed upon to relinquish some, but not one upon compulsion; and when the regrets of the inhabitants were at their height for the dispersion of this splendid collection, he was comforted by a Calembourg bulletin in the name of the German commandant;

The Parisians go about, snivelling and snuffing;
They may just as well let it alone.—BARON MUFFLING.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PARIS IN 1814 (*continued*).

Star of the brave ! thy ray is pale,
And darkness must again prevail.
But oh, thou rainbow of the free !
Our tears and blood must flow for thee :
When thy bright promise fades away,
Our life is but a load of clay.

The Star of the Legion of Honour.

BYRON (from the French).

WHEN I entered Paris, I found no civilian before me but Dr. Wollaston, who had been admitted by the special permission of the French Government before its overthrow ; and it would take a volume, even briefly, to describe the unparalleled condition of the place, and the multitude who thronged it in every part. But in a work like this I must, as it were, gallop over the interesting ground with a few miscellaneous reminiscences. Nor will the galloping be confined to me, for there was little else than galloping all over Paris. With imposition on every hand, and in every charge, things would not have been so dear but for the cruel exchange of nearly thirty per cent. against the English stranger ; and yet, with so much to see and enjoy, there was no time for complaint. From my tolerably snug domicile (after a few absolutely necessary reforms had been effected), the Hôtel de Rome, near our ambassador's and his Russian sentinels,

a stroll to Tortoni's to breakfast, was an easy and pleasant transition. Cotelettes or fricandeaus and wine were an agreeable change for everlasting tea and toast ; but if not, they must be endured, for the continental system had blocked colonial produce out of the country. There was coffee, and occasionally a suspicion of tea, made of the dried leaves of birch-brooms (intelligent middle-class females in the provinces did not know what tea was), and sugar, in small portions, probably from beet-root, so prized that never a lump was left in the glass or basin, after the *eau sucrée* was drunk, but wrapped in a bit of paper, and carefully conveyed to the pocket of the customer, who felt that he had paid for it, and had a right to do what he liked with his own. Then, if Tortoni's was good, Beauvillier's, in the Rue de Richelieu, for dinner, was still better. You cannot match it in Paris now. The cuisine was perfect, the cellar superb : from five to seven hundred people dined there every day, and there never was cause to find fault. The finest wines of France, with one exception (Clos Vougeot, of 1788,) ranged under the price of eight francs a bottle to two or three, and when admirable red and white hermitage, sillery first quality, the best Laffitte, &c., are placed at the top of the list, and excellent champagne, burgundy, and claret, &c., in the descending scale, it may well be asked in 1852, why the British consumer pays so much higher a sum for very inferior vintages with very high-sounding names.

But it was not the viands at this celebrated restaurant which daily attracted me to my dinner there. The company were of a description to surpass the utmost curiosity of an English tourist, and especially of one who, for many months, had been anxiously following events, and publishing, to the best of his knowledge and belief, for the information of his country, the most authentic accounts of the feats of

the leading allied commanders. Conceive, then, my astonishment and delight at finding myself in the midst of them, gazing at the illustrious men in the next boxes to me, whose heroic exploits I had so long been celebrating with my utmost powers—and you may imagine that it needed no Romanée nor Chambertin (nor porter Anglais at two francs a bottle !) to make me almost drunk and delirious with excitement. But I had better illustrate this matter by a general description than by sequent details. It was on the first or the second day I dined at Beauvillier's that a fair, Saxon-looking gentleman came and seated himself at my table. I think he chose the seat advertently, from having observed, or gathered, that I was fresh from London. We speedily entered into conversation, and he pointed out to me some of the famous individuals who were doing justice to the Parisian cookery at the various tables around—probably about twenty in all. As he mentioned their names I could not repress my enthusiasm—a spirit burning over England when I left it only a few days before—and my new acquaintance seemed to be much gratified by my ebullitions. “Well,” said he, to a question from me, “that is Davidoff, the colonel of the Black Cossacks.” I shall not repeat my exclamations of surprise and pleasure at the sight of this terrific leader, who had hovered over the enemy everywhere, cut off so many resources, and performed such incredible marches and actions as to render him and his Cossacks the dread of their foes. “Is this,” inquired my companion, “the opinion of England?” I assured him it was, and let out the secret of my editorial consequence, in proof that I was a competent witness. On this a change of scene ensued. My *incognito* walked across to Davidoff, who forthwith filled and sent me a glass of his wine (the glass he was using), and drank

my health. I followed the example, and sent mine in return, and the compliment was completed. But it did not stop with this single instance. My new fair-complexioned friend went to another table, and spoke with a bronzed and hardy-looking warrior, from whom he came with another similar bumper to me, and the request that I would drink wine with General Czernicheff. I was again in flames ; but it is unnecessary to repeat the manner in which I, on that, to me, memorable day, took wine with half-a-dozen of the most distinguished generals in the allied service.

Whilst this toasting-bout was going on, a seedy-looking old gentleman came in, and I noticed that some younger officers rose and offered him a place, which he rejected, till a vacancy occurred, and then he quietly sat down, swallowed his two dozen of green oysters as a whet, and proceeded to dine with an appetite. By this time my *vis-à-vis* had resumed his seat, and, after what had passed, I felt myself at liberty to ask him the favour of informing me who he himself was ! I was soon answered. He was a Mr. Parris, of Hamburgh, whose prodigious commissariat engagements with the grand army had been fulfilled in a manner to prosper the war ; and I was now at no loss to account for his intimacy with its heroes. It so happened that I knew, and was on friendly terms with some of his near relations ; and so the two hours I have described took the value of two years. But the climax had to come. Who was the rather seedy-looking personage whom the aides-de-camp appeared so ready to accommodate ? Oh that was Blucher ! If I was outrageous before, I was mad now. I explained to Mr. Parris the feeling of England with regard to this hero ; and that amid the whole host of great and illustrious names, his had become the most glorious of all, and was really the one which filled most unanimously and loudly the trump of

fame. He told me that an assurance of this would be most gratifying to the marshal, who thought much of the approbation of England, and asked my leave to communicate to him what I had said. I could have no objection ; but after a short colloquy, Blucher did not send his glass to me—he came himself ; and I hob-nobbed with the immortal soldier. I addressed him in French, to which he would not listen ; and I then told him in English of the glorious estimation in which he was held in my country, which Mr. Parris translated into German ; and if ever high gratification was evinced by man, it was by Blucher on this occasion. I had the honour of breakfasting with him at his hotel next morning, when the welcome matter was discussed more circumstantially, and he evinced the greatest delight. When he was in London, I, among the crowds that wearied his levees, endeavoured to remind him of our Paris meetings, but he had forgotten them ; the seven years of plenty had obliterated the recollection of their advent.

This was an interregnum time. Napoleon had been sent off on the 21st of April, and was getting away from the south of France when Louis le Désiré was about getting into it on the north. A strange disorderly order pervaded France, and especially Paris. Everybody seemed to do what they liked, and though there was a certain "Occupation" restraint, liberty and license were carried to as enormous an extent as vice ever triumphed in or virtue mourned. It was impossible to distinguish the true from the false : the world appeared to be made of expedients, and if they were not exceedingly criminal, there was no harm done, nor censure incurred.

The entry of Louis XVIII. into Paris, on the 4th of May, was a splendid spectacle, and the parade on the banks of the Seine of the *élite* of the Allied Forces, the

huge green Russian (especially the gigantic Grenadiers), blue Prussian, and tight white Austrian Guards,* no slight addition to the heterogeneous scene. The rejoicings must have been contagious, for more universal and enthusiastic manifestations of happiness and exultation were never seen than were here exhibited by French, English, German, Italian, Russian, Spaniard, Dane, Swede, Dutchman, Austrian, Prussian, Hungarian, Cossack, Swiss, Pole, and every other diversity of country and people. Every one realised the Quaker's song—

And I say unto thee that verily, ah
 Verily, ah verily, ah ;
 And I say unto thee that verily, ah,
 Thou and I shall be first in the throng!

Buonaparte's exit from Fontainebleau not a fortnight before was already a forgotten event in history ; and the *fêtes* given by the city of Toulouse to Lord Wellington had only preceded these illuminations, fireworks, loyal shoutings, and revelries which filled the capital with a mad joy. The Paris workmen had a troublesome and difficult job to prepare the way for the restoration by effacing and removing the thousands of imperial crowns, N's, and Bees with which every possible place and thing were covered, and the puns and jokes upon them, as they cut and chiselled away at their labours, were almost as numerous as the objects they were removing. *Il a des N. mit (ennemis) partout* was a truism in every mouth, and the busy bees had their hum, and their honey, and their stings hived in a hundred

* These looked very different from a body of three or four thousand I met on the road. They had been taken prisoners in one of the battles fought near Paris, and had just been released, and were on their way to rejoin their companions in arms. But no arms had they, and I could compare them to nothing else than a flock of sheep ; for they appeared as harmless and passive. J.

epigrams. On the outside of public buildings, and on all articles in the inside, from walls and ceilings to chairs and covers, one week had sufficed to eradicate the innumerable symbols of the ex-Emperor, and pictures were covered with green baize lest they should offend the Bourbon eye and sentiment. White flags were flying everywhere, and I think none but white pigeons were permitted to fly in the same air—the parti-coloured birds, I suppose, were killed and cooked. The theatres were opened gratuitously, and rewarded with bumper houses. The cries and inscriptions of “Peace,” and “Concord” alone were heard and seen, and never can Europe again witness such a spectacle. The streets were lined with the National Guards of Paris, between whose ranks rode the Russian General and his attendant Cossacks, the Austrian Cuirassier, the Prussian Landwehr, the German Lancer, the wild Croat from the south, and the Scandinavian Swede from the north; whilst, to crown the wondrous sight, the Imperial Guards of Napoleon (now the Royal) and the old troops of the French army, with countenances as rigid and as dark as bronze, marched in front of the triumphal car of the restored Bourbon Monarch. The Tartar of the Don and the soldier of the Seine rode peacefully at least (it may be sulkily) side by side. Five days before Buonaparte sailed from Fréjus to take possession of his small kingdom; and his brothers, Joseph, Louis, and Jerome had left France for various retreats in Switzerland.

I have still to describe another of the most remarkable features on this memorable day. It was the advent of the Duke of Wellington from Toulouse, and his appearance in plain clothes, so as to court no notice as he rode along with Lord Castlereagh, Lord Aberdeen (I think), and other distinguished Englishmen, in the cavalcade of the British

Ambassador, Sir Charles Stewart, which swept up about noon to the grand review of the allied troops quartered in Paris. The hero was soon discovered, and the rumour spread rapidly among the crowds on every hand ; and truly it did astonish me to behold his reception by the inhabitants of the prostrate city. They hurra'd and shouted as if they were demented, and a French conqueror of Great Britain had suddenly descended among them. "Vive Vellington ! Vive le brave Vellington !" resounded from ten thousand throats ; and from this day to the last during which he remained, be the applauses and testimonials of admiration to others whatever they might be, the plaudits and the *vives* for Vellington were always the most obstreperous and loudest of them all.

A grand ball given in the evening by Sir Charles Stewart, was a superb climax to this *dies mirabilis*. The rooms were crammed, and for the first time under a pacific roof, met the long pitted deadly foes to each other, the allied statesmen, and generals, and the statesmen and marshals of France. It was a strange vision—Schwartzenberg and Berthier, Blucher and Ney, Platoff and Marmont, Wittgenstein and Mortier, the Archduke Constantine and Talleyrand, Hardenberg and Augereau, Czernicheff and Moncey, Davidoff and Brune, D'Yorke and Serurier, Woronzoff and Jourdan, St. Priest and Macdonald, all strolling about and conversing in the most amiable manner—a perfect mob of princes, commanders, and famous politicians and warriors ; and still among the foremost, Wellington and the representatives of England, to whom it was a proud triumph. The Emperor Alexander opened the ball by dancing with Madame Ney, the Princess of Moskwa. Coming events did not cast their shadows before—and war's grim-visaged front entirely relaxed to dress in compliments and smiles for this merry

meeting. I was indebted to Lord Burghersh (now Earl of Westmoreland) for the favour of my ticket to this extraordinary entertainment, and went in company with a young and accomplished countryman, Mr. Turner, whose fate soon after, was a very distressing one. When I left Paris, I accommodated him with the remaining gold I did not want, and took a letter for repayment to London, to save the heavy exchange. His purpose was to make a pedestrian excursion through the provinces, to see the country and become acquainted with the habits and customs of the population. Unfortunate was the undertaking ; he started on his journey and never was heard of more. The last memorial of him was my letter ; and it is to be feared that the tempting gold led to his murder, and the secret concealment of his corse. France was not exempt from numerous tragical incidents of a similar kind at that period.

But to return for a short while to Paris and its daily shows. Among the most novel and amusing the Cossacks certainly played the prominent parts. It was common to see officers of high rank, and bedizened with crosses, stars, and ribands, galloping (everybody galloped) through the streets on magnificent horses, magnificently trapped, and attended by their Orderly Cossacks, probably mounted on ragged-looking, but swift and hardy, mares, with colts or fillies, of French birth, trotting at their heels. Their spears, instead of straight shafts, were occasionally crooked, in consequence of the original being splintered in fight, and the succedaneum cut as handily as might be out of the nearest wood. There was one bivouac on the shore of the river, just below the handsome Pont des Arts, where, as it were for the sake of contrast, these wild and old-fashioned looking beings, with their hair cut round, like the old Holbein portraits, their imposing beards, their cumbrous waggon, their gipay tents,

their leather coats, their rude horse-pickets, their uproarious meals, and their native songs, furnished me many an hour of wonder and gratification. Their appearance was savage and forbidding enough, but their music was peculiar, rather plaintive, and altogether pleasing. In the main they were exceedingly good-natured fellows, of which a proof was related to me by a gentleman on the frontier. He and his family were terrified by having several Cossacks billeted upon them as they marched that way ; but "only think," added my informant, "they not only conducted themselves peaceably and civilly throughout the afternoon and night, but when I rose in the morning, I perceived that they were up before, and kindly watering my garden from end to end." I did not dispel his belief ; though I was aware that this watering system was habitual with the courteous Cossacks, who knowing that money and valuables were often buried on their approach, adopted this means of ascertaining the fact, as the water immediately sank where the ground had been recently dug up, and remained longer stagnant upon the other parts of the soil. Where it sank they searched, and I was assured immense booty was realised by the simple process.

Another trait may be cited to illustrate my subject. I went with a friend or two to see Versailles, though the noble château was uninhabited, and its vast saloons painfully vacant. There was only a third-rate cabaret close by, where we ordered dinner, and having gone over the palace and seen thirty or forty Spaniards released from the adjacent prison, we went back for our refection. Before sitting down we were invited into the kitchen, where we found a good deal of dilapidation going on by the side of the fire-place. Our host and hostess were mysterious, till at length the apparent wall gave way and discovered a spacious oven of by-gone times, out of which, to our surprise, were brought

portraits of Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, the Dauphin, and the Duchess d'Angoulême, which had been consigned and hidden "à la cache" at the date of the revolution. Of course they were forthwith installed in the dining room ; and toasts to the restored Bourbons, the illustrious English, and the loyal French were proposed, right and left, and drunk with enthusiasm.

As a small national drawback, I may just mention that next morning I purchased a pretty pencil-case, within the top of which was concealed, in miniature, one of the best whole-length likenesses of Buonaparte which I ever saw.

Why should I speak of the Opera, where the noble aristocratic presence of Lord and Lady Castlereagh eclipsed every other box, and were admired specimens of the Island race ; showing, perhaps, in public places to greater advantage, in consequence of the tawdry uniforms, and *petit* and mean appearance of the majority of the French marshals, though some of them were very fine-looking men ? Or why should I refer to the delight I experienced in Talma and Georges ? I must bid Paris, with all its marvels, farewell, and with two brief reminiscences conclude this chapter.

I was informed, in conversation with the courteous and obliging Lord Burghersh, who, it will be remembered, was accredited, on the part of Great Britain, to the head quarters of the invading forces, that the dash upon Paris was the result of an opportunity afforded the allied generals to ascertain almost exactly the amount of the army of Napoleon, which he, by his amazing activity of movements and crafty stratagems of war, had succeeded in making appear much greater than it really was. When he resolved on the desperate measure to throw himself between the allies and the Rhine and south of France, combine with his numerous garrisons on the former, and still unsubdued divisions in the

latter, and, with the united grand force, again try the fortune of war, his morning march along the heights betrayed his secret weakness, and enabled his enemies to calculate his numbers almost to a single file. On this depended the immediate destiny of his empire: the battled march to and surrender of the capital.

My other anecdote is of peace and the fine arts, though connected with war and pillage. At a *soirée*, where Talleyrand was of the party, the conversation of a few individuals, knotted in a corner of the room, turned on the pictures brought from Spain by Soult and Wellington; and it was discussed which of the two had the most valuable collection, on which the witty Prince de Périgord, with the usual twinkle of his eye and dry manner, remarked that important as these treasures were, the most extraordinary circumstance of the whole affair was, that the Duke of Wellington had paid money for his acquisitions!!!

CHAPTER XXIV.

RETURN—BYRON CHALLENGE—ANECDOTES.

———“ He whose nod,
 Has tumbled feeble despots from their sway,
 A moment pauseth ere he lifts the rod ;
 A little moment deigneth to delay ;
 Soon will his legions sweep through these his way ;
 The West must own the scourger of the world.
 Oh ! Spain ! how sad will be thy reckoning-day,
 When soars Gaul's vulture with his wings unfurled,
 And thou shalt see thy sons in crowds to Hades hurled.”
 BYRON. *Childe Harold*. 1812.

“ Or, may I give adventurous fancy scope,
 And stretch a bold hand to the awful veil
 That hides futurity from anxious hope,
 Bidding, beyond it, scenes of glory hail,
 And fainting Europe rousing at the tale
 Of Spain's invaders from her confines hurled ;
 While kindling nations buckle on their mail,
 And Fame, with clarion blast and wing unfurled,
 To freedom and revenge awakes an injured world !”
 SOUTHEY. *Vision of Don Roderick*. 1811.

On leaving Paris, it was my good fortune to meet with a fellow traveller, also bound for London, and to agree with him that we should return together. We accordingly hired a carriage, and proceeded without hurry on our destination, and I soon learnt that I could not have fallen in with a more congenial and agreeable companion. Mr. Douglas Kinnaird, was at the time, one of the most zealous members of the Drury Lane Committee of Management, his enthusiasm

about Kean, and his anxiety about the success of the theatre excessive, and his anecdotes of Lord Byron, Whitbread, Peter Moore, and others, racy and entertaining in the highest degree. With regard to Byron he informed me of a circumstance which more nearly affected me than I had ever dreamt of in my slight intercourse with that noble lord. It appeared that the remarks I published on his unworthy lines to Mrs. Charlemont (his lady's attendant) had given him mortal offence, and, in the ebullition of his fury, he deemed it right to demand satisfaction, and entrusted the challenge to be delivered to Mr. Kinnaird. Knowing his friend, that gentleman *found* that he could not *find* me during the whole day. Newspaper folks were difficult of access, and towards evening took occasion to appeal from Philip drunk to Philip sober, and to put it to his lordship whether it was not infinitely beneath his dignity to call out a paltry scribbler, who might even, by some awkward chance, shoot him and rob the peerage and the poetic world of one of their greatest ornaments. This and more to a similar effect my informant jocularly told me, and insisted on my owing him a deep debt of gratitude for his prudent conduct, especially as Lord Byron was a certain shot! At any rate he had dissuaded the angry bard from his desperate purpose; and all that the public may have since gained from him or me, may possibly be attributable to the sensible advice of Mr. Kinnaird. He had kept the cartel and promised it to me as an autograph, and I dare say (if not stolen or taken with hundreds of others) I shall turn it up from among the masses of papers, which (very partially examined) have sadly tried my patience and almost crazed my brain, in preparing these sheets for the press.

We slept one night on the road, in a double-bedded

room, on a stone floor, and our cotelettes and omelette charmingly cooked at the wood fire in the same chamber ; such was the best of the journey between Paris and the coast at that primitive initiative of international intercourse. On the further side of the channel, Mr. Kinnaird had his own light barouche in waiting, and we posted up, in all haste, from Dover. It was midnight when we stopped to change horses at Canterbury, and so intense was my companion's desire to learn something of Kean, who, I think, had performed in a new character, that he actually caused the hostlers to "knock-up the house," in order to ascertain if there was any newspaper from town, or the landlord or waiter had heard anything of the play !

During the rest of his life—for he was prematurely taken from his friends and the world—I continued my pleasant acquaintance with this gentleman, who possessed many traits well calculated to enhance his appreciation in society and companionable qualities. A portion of humour, or drollery, would be mixed up with his other attainments ; and Coleridge told a piquant story of him at the time the tragedy of "Remorse" was offered to, and accepted by, the managers of old Drury.

Mr. Kinnaird, according to my authority, had invited him (Coleridge) to Pall Mall, where he resided, to read the tragedy in question for his judgment thereon. The poet attended the manager, as in duty bound, and was shown into his boudoir, or dressing-room, where he was assiduously making his toilet. Without interrupting the process of shaving, teeth-cleaning, nail-paring and scooping, &c., &c., he desired the poet to proceed with his reading, and the poet complied ; his didactic tone and sonorous voice ceasing at times, in the hope, perhaps, that the pause might allow of a compliment or expression of admiration being administered.

But the critic shaved, and made no sign ; dressed his nails, and spoke not. Coleridge read on, and had got through an act or more, as he related the tale—and an excellent hand he was at embellishment in such cases—when his auditor suddenly stopped him, and pulling out a drawer full of papers from his dressing-glass, said, “ Now, my good friend, I have listened to enough of your nonsense ; and, in return, I have to request your attention to a little two-act piece of mine, which I think will be a hit at Drury ! ” And Coleridge had to listen in turn ; for it will not do for dramatists to displease managers ; and so Mr. Kinnaird never knew the remainder of “ Remorse ” till it was produced upon the boards ; and Sheridan had his jest upon the cavern scene, where the percolating of the water is described—“ Drip, drip, drip,” said the satirist ; “ nothing but dripping.” It is the work of a man of genius, notwithstanding ; I am sorry I cannot record the fate of my esteemed fellow-traveller’s “ little two-act piece ! ” Observe, I very seldom employ italics, because I trust to the inherent essence of my stories, and the intelligence of my readers, to detect their merits ; and if I fail, I continue, nevertheless, of the opinion that italics are, at best, but civil bowing letters, begging of you, with due ceremony, to believe that there is point, or wit, or humour, where there is none.

Among my curious memoranda about this time, is the note of being taken by my friend, Mr. (Sir F.) Freeling, to see and dine with the celebrated Lady Hamilton in the King’s Bench Prison. She was *embonpoint*, and still a fine woman ; full of complaints, but too truly founded, of the cruel neglect she experienced from Government, and the ungrateful return made for her own public services, as well as to the dying behests of her glorious sailor. The deep conviction I that day received, of the stern inflexibility

with which official form can perpetrate and adhere to wrong, has never yet been removed by my acquaintance with not a few other cases, nor by reparation being given for humanity's sake and the honour of the country, on which the treatment of those whom its Nelson loved is still a shameful stain. Men, in their private transactions, would shrink from acts of such ignominious ingratitude ; but state departments, like corporate bodies or numerous partnerships, have neither feelings nor a nice sense of truth and justice. Mr. Freeling interested himself much with the Government in the cause of Lady Hamilton, but with little, if any, effect. I have, however, an idea that something was done for her immediate relief.

Again I was seated at my daily desk in the "Sun," and the world jogged on more peaceably, if little less quietly, than before ; for royal visits, and national rejoicings, and interesting events, rose rapidly to fill the scene with pageants and new changes, which, though of different aspects, were equal in importance to the past. With these, and the actors in them, I shall have something to do, as I travel onwards to my more strictly literary avocations, in 1817, and meanwhile drop the curtain on my first year's editing of a ministerial journal, referring to the poetic heading of this chapter for the contrast which led to mortification, on the one side, and triumph on the other. *

The literary leaning nourished in my nature, as I have endeavoured to trace it to the fortunate tuition of Dr. Rutherford, (for with all the ills it may bring in its course, a taste for literature and literary occupation is a great blessing,) was manifested as soon as the desperate din of war and absorbing strife of politics were so far quelled as to allow a breathing time for aught else to be heard or seen.

* See Appendix. "The March to Moscow."

I immediately projected a Review of new Works to form a peace feature in the paper ; and this, I believe, was the first example of any attention of the kind being paid by the newspaper press to the productions of its less ephemeral brethren of the quill. When I look around me at this date, I cannot but feel a sensible gratification on witnessing this little plant become the parent of a vast tree that overspreads the land, and possesses a universal influence upon the interests of literature. It is true that

They must dig who gather ore,
And they must dig who gather lore ;

and that we have a considerable proportion of very superficial scratchers of the soil, both among authors and critics, but the mere fact of notoriety is a wonderful advantage to the really deserving, and can do but little temporary mischief in keeping back the sterling, puffing the mediocre, or bolstering up the trashy. Some years hence, however, in my narrative, will be a fitter time more fully to discuss this important question.

London was now inundated with continental arrivals of monarchs, of statesmen, of warriors, of amateurs, of works of art and vertu, and of articles of luxury, the importation of which had so long been prohibited. The restoration of the Bourbons had not only replenished Paris with statues, busts, portraits, paintings, engravings, and other mementos of the murdered and exiled family, which had been concealed during the reign of terror and revolutionary era ; but the same repositories had yielded immense quantities of antique furniture, knick-knacks, curiosities, and productions of old masters for virtuoso admiration and purchase in England. The rage for instant transmission, too, before Custom-house regulations could be established, was indescribable : a Parisian dealer offered me a beautiful lace

dress, on condition that I should carry another along with it in my trunk, and deliver the latter to the address of a lady in London—it had been wrought for the Queen of Holland, and was valued at three thousand francs! I declined the mission; and it was lucky I did, for, notwithstanding a very cursory inspection of my luggage at Dover, there was a contraband packet discovered on the very top of all, and seized as a transgression which could not be passed by. I had been asked, as a favour, to take it just as I was setting out, by the celebrated Peltier; and my whole “kit” exposed to forfeiture as a consequence of this friendly indiscretion.

During the summer and autumnal months of this year there were abundance of incidents to interest the public; and a retrospective glance suggests a strange medley. The Princess Charlotte’s hackney-coach adventure, when she scolded her Bishop tutor, ran away from Warwick-house to her mother’s in Connaught Place, and the match with the Prince of Orange was finally broken off, was a nine days’ wonder. The advent of Joanna Southcote, and the silver cradle making for the expected Shiloh, lasted longer. The mimic fleet on the Serpentine was an immense popular card, demonstrating that all rulers who take the trouble to devise amusements for the populace know what they are about, and how to smother disaffection, and create loyal attachment. The effect of a genuine holiday upon a working population is not to be calculated, and politicians would do well to study the problem.

But the grand visit of the allied monarchs and their famous followers to London, was the focus of universal curiosity and admiration. Sight after sight, fête after fête, and extraordinary novelty after novelty, kept the imagination on the stretch, and seemed to plunge everybody

into an activity for pleasure hunting, as if the British empire had been turned into one Greenwich Fair. From morning to night there was nothing but whirl and delirium : there was no life but the present ; all the past was forgotten, and what the future might bring forth was uncared for. Among the most prominent attractions were the Emperor Alexander, the Duchess of Oldenburgh, Blucher and Platoff. Blucher was lodged in the small house, now occupied by Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence, in St. James's Palace, and was scarcely allowed an hour's rest in the four-and-twenty, by the genteel crowds forcing their way into his privacy, and the common crowds assembling in the court on the outside, and hallooing till they made him show himself at the window, hat in hand, meerschaum in mouth, and bow his thanks for the uproarious distinction. The old General was fatigued enough with his restless reception, and would sometimes, I think, rather have been in a charge of cavalry than in the rush of female onset, which all but shook him to pieces. In a few moments' conversation with him I referred to our Paris meeting, but, much as it interested him at the time, it was as I have already noticed, all driven out of his head, and he appeared to recollect nothing about it, as a half-score more of ladies were admitted to shake hands with him, or, inestimable prize ! be honoured with a salute ! In the evening he probably longed for a cool sederunt at the gaming-table, and a view at the heaps of gold, the coins of every nation, French, English, Italian, Dutch, German, Russian, of all sorts and dates, which composed the glittering miscellaneous bank, and tempted visitors to the risks of fickle Fortune. Platoff, it was said, carried off three of his lady friends with him when he left England, and settled them as Prima Donnas and samples of

British beauty, somewhere upon the Don ! Different tastes were exhibited by the strangers, and according to their fancies did they indulge to the full in the enjoyments unsparingly provided on every hand. The King of Prussia, one of the quietest of them all, was especially captivated with the excellence of a national fare which, perhaps, never acquired such royal approval before. The gentleman appointed to be his principal attendant, and see that all his wants and wishes were supplied in St. James's Palace, where he was lodged, told me that his Majesty made the poorest possible figure at the gorgeous dinners at Carlton House, because he had lunched heartily before on what he liked much better than even the Prince Regent's exquisite cuisine and cellar, viz., fine Cheshire cheese and Burton ale. On these daily did the King luxuriate; and my informant used jocularly to say, that if ever he went to Berlin he would take a gigantic Cheshire and a cask of Burton with him, and he had no doubt but the highest preferments in the kingdom would be open to his ambition.

As after a storm in the realms of nature there is ever a partial convulsive motion left, a rising and a fall in the lately vexed sea, and traces of the hurricane upon the earth; so after the pacification, did a succession of events still agitate the public mind, and afford themes of no slight difficulty to the pen of the public writer. The death of the Ex-Empress Josephine cast a shadow over many sensitive hearts; for though her husband could not exclaim with Macbeth, " She should have died hereafter ; " as, in truth, both for his sake and her own, she should have died before; yet her amiable character, and patient endurance of her unhappy lot, had endeared her much to all who had an opportunity of observing her life and conversation; and as her political sacrifice had been pitied, so was her death

regretted by a multitude of sympathising admirers, on the banks of the Thames as well as on the Seine, between which rivers, by-the-by, her love of botanical pursuits had kept up an intercourse when all the rest of Europe was hermetically sealed against English enterprise.

The great Peace Jubilee, with the bridges and pagodas in St. James's Park, the fleet on the Serpentine, and the symbols, tumults, and rejoicings everywhere, was another of the fruitful topics of the time. Its converse, on the opposite and painful side, was to be found in the party intrigues and disgraceful disputes about the Princess of Wales, and her consequent departure from this country. But upon this subject I have matters, as I venture to presume, of peculiar interest to relate, and which I cannot conveniently weave into my narrative, so near the close of the volume; I shall, therefore, at the latest hour, beg for an allowance of time and credit, till my next *tome* appears, for their revelation. Mr. Canning's Lisbon mission will, then, also demand my illustration; and, in the meanwhile, not inconsistently with the literary and miscellaneous character of my autobiography, I offer as a reward for granting me this boon, and to enrich these concluding pages with a production that cannot fail to charm every reader of taste and intelligence where the English tongue is spoken, an unpublished work of my late lamented friend, Thomas Hood, whose memory will stand on a higher pinnacle with posterity for his serious and pathetic writings than even for those quaint and facetious performances by which he contributed so largely to the harmless mirth of his age, and in which he was unrivalled.* Hook, also, has I believe left a drama in manuscript, but where I cannot say, unless it may be among Mr. Bentley's stores of dead and sleeping authorship.

* See Appendix.

POSTSCRIPT.

London, 16th April, 1852.

By looking back to the date of my birth it will be seen that on this my birth-day, I finish the task of my first volume, having just received the printers' welcome intimation that there is copy enough in hand to complete the announced quantity. But I am yet more anxious about the quality; and would fain move an *à priori* arrest of judgment for any errors or inaccuracies which may have escaped me in the haste of composition. I had, apparently, sufficient time for my work, but private circumstances, of no concern to readers, occurred to break hurtfully into it, and on coming to consult data which I had presumed could be readily found and accessible, I discovered that the materials of from forty to fifty years ago were dissipated, no one knew whither! I was thus thrown for the nonce into more difficult labours, with less opportunity for the exact verification of particulars; and it is for any omission and imperfections in respect to these, that I venture to seek the candour of the critic and the indulgence of the public.

W. J.

APPENDIX.

A, p. 12.

ABERRATIONS of reason and weakness of intellect have always deeply excited the attention of thinking men. The curious condition of the Scottish "daft-folks," especially of harmless imbeciles and idiots, of which class almost every town and village, as I have mentioned, enjoyed a representative, could not escape the eye of the great delineator of mankind, from the top to the bottom of the social scale. Respecting one of them near Abbotsford he used to tell, in his naïve and matchless manner, a story; which, as far as I know, has not found its way into print. In strolling forth with his trusty crony, Sir Adam Ferguson, the question ran upon the happiness or the reverse in different stations in life, Ferguson maintaining that there were certain fortunate beings who were exempt from the common troubles to which others were exposed, and Scott holding the opposite argument. As they walked in the fine sunshiny day, they came up with the privileged "fool" of the place, whom Scott immediately addressed, and something like the following colloquy ensued:

Scott. We'el Andrew, how are you?

Andrew. Weel, very weel, thank ye sheriff, for speiring.

Scott. Naebody harms you, I hope, Andrew! are a' the folks careful about ye, and kind to ye?

Andrew. 'Deed are they. A' very kind. A' the warld are kind to poor Andrew!

Scott. We'el fed, I hope; I see ye are we'el clad.

Andrew. Heh! ay! Plenty to eat, and a gude coat on my back! Isn't it, sheriff?

Scott. Yes, Andrew, and I am glad to see it. But as everybody is so kind to you, and you are every way sae weel off, I suppose I must just conclude that you are one of the happiest of human creatures, and can have nothing to distress you.

Andrew (hastily). Na, na, had ye there, sheriff! It would be a' very happy if it war na for that d—d Bubbly Jock (turkey cock). The bairns use me well enough, but they canna help roaring and shouting when they see that cursed brute chasing me about, with his neck a' in fury, and his gobble, gobble, going enough to frighten the de'il. He's after me every day, and maks me perfectly miserable.

Scott (turning to Sir Adam). Ah, Ferguson, in this life of ours, be assured that every man has his own Bubbly Jock!

B, p. 16.

An eccentric character, such as is now rare in London, used till his death, a very few years ago, to frequent the well-known dinner house and tavern, called the Blue Posts, in Cork Street, a favourite resort, by-the-by, of Old Ebony when he visited town, and the haunt of the literati connected with "ma Mag" as well as of others, who contributed to the press in all directions. He was, it may be guessed, an Octogenarian, and his table and seat were invariably kept for him in a corner of the room, and he as invariably occupied them, summer and winter, as the clock struck his hour of seven. He was pointed out to me as a person who had been acquainted with Burns in his early days, when he came to Edinburgh with his first volume. This was very exciting news, and many an effort did I make to get introduced, so that I might hear something from a living witness of the glorious ploughman. At last I succeeded, and lost no time in popping the question about the poet's appearance, his looks, his habits, and the most minute particulars my venerable friend could remember. Upon which he looked at me with a sort of wondering look, and answered:

"I mind (remember) Burns perfectly ; but what more would you wish to know ? He was a ganger (an exciseman) and it cost me a Guinea to subscribe to his nonsensical book, which might have been much better bestowed."

I turned from my late respected informant with horror ; and never would speak to him again as long as he lasted at the Blue Posts.

C, p. 16.

The village of Ednam is two miles from Kelso, and its picturesque and fertile farm was occupied by my mother's eldest brother, John Stuart, the beau-ideal type of a wealthy farmer of that day,—downright but gentlemanly, frank and hospitable, and inhabiting a land of Goshen, in the plenteousness of which lived the lusty pony which bore my brother for embarkation to the sea-side. As the birth-place of Thomson it always possessed still greater attractions for me, and as the annexed sketch is so intimately connected with, and illustrative of, my text, that it might congenially form a part of it, I offer no excuse for inserting it here. It was written for a certain purpose which was abandoned, and I only had a very few copies printed for private circulation ; and, notwithstanding the late valuable researches of Mr. Bolton Corney, for Messrs. Longmans' beautiful edition of the poet, I trust the new matter it contains will be acceptable to all literary readers.

The Life of Thomson has been so often written, and Thomson's "Seasons" have been published in so many forms and editions, that it might appear as if nothing new could be told of the former, nor any improvement made on the latter. It is our trust, however, that we may be able not only to add some matters of interest to the memoirs of the bard, but to correct errors which have crept into preceding biographies, and misconceptions touching his immortal poem.

At the distance of nearly a century, research into the private circumstances of an individual career could hope for but small reward in the shape of prominent discoveries ; and, where sifted as closely as that of Thomson has been, for but little of

more minute particulars that had escaped observation. But it usually happens, in the descent of biographical writings from generation to generation, that the second follows the statements of the first, and the third of the second, and so on for ever, with many variations in the words, and very slight variations in the facts; and thus the last is only a servile imitation of the original, repeating and perpetuating all that it contained of wrong, rectifying no mistakes, committing new blunders, and supplying no novelty worthy of notice or dependence; in short,

“ Misplacing, misdating,
Misquoting, misstating,
It lies ”

We have endeavoured to “reform this indifferently,” if not altogether; and can, at least, truly say that we are not of the “*imitatores, servum pecus*.” And if our claim can apply in a limited degree to the incidents of the poet's life, we feel that we can take higher ground on the subject of his great work.

Notwithstanding what Dr. Johnson states, whose opinions of Thomson himself, and all that concerned him, are shown by Sir Harris Nicolas to have been exceedingly unfriendly and prejudiced,* the poet's father, though blessed with nine children, must have been rather well to do in the station of parish minister of Edenham or Ednam, which he filled with respectability and piety. The stipend was paid in money, and amounted to nearly 100*l.* a-year, besides a cow's pasturage, house and garden, and a large and productive 'glebe; which, added to the income from the small estate of Mrs. Thomson, must have been a more ample provision than was enjoyed by many clergymen who nominally possessed a much larger revenue, but were paid in grain, and liable to fluctuations with the price of that commodity. These having increased with the rise in the value of produce, whilst Ednam has remained

* When describing the external appearance of the yet unknown bard, in London, the Doctor says, with a laconic coldness of heart and want of sympathy which does small honour to his feelings for a brother in distress —“His first want was a pair of shoes;” and what is, perhaps worse, inasmuch as falsehood is worse than coldness, it is proved by Thomson's letters that it could not be true; for though he was in difficulties for money, he was not in beggary.

stationary, with the exception of two augmentations, may have led to the notion that it was comparatively a poor living a century and a half ago, which, in point of fact, it was not. The minister's income from the kirk, according to data applicable to the present day, would be equal to not less than 300*l.* per annum; which is still deemed an adequate fortune for that condition of life in a rural district.

The manse, or house, was beautifully situated at the east end of the village of Ednam, with the garden in front, bounded by the river Eden on the south; a fine "trouting" stream, which rises in the Lammer muirs, and falls into the Tweed about four miles from the village. Almost immediately behind the manse was the mansion-house of the Edmondstones of Ednam, an ancient border race, who for eight hundred years possessed the fertile barony of that name; dismembering it, however, piecemeal, till the last portion was sold some forty or fifty years after the birth of the poet. It is a curious circumstance that this ancient line never rose beyond the state of feudal country gentry, though inheriting immense estates and descended from royalty; Andrew Edmondstone, in 1388, having married the widow of the Douglas slain at Otterburn, who was the daughter of King Robert the Second.*

Many amusing anecdotes might be given to illustrate the intercourse between the laird and the minister; but as in the foregoing collateral episode our object is simply to relate matters, the effects of which upon his young mind can be readily traced in many of the scenes, pictures, traits of character, and descriptions in Thomson's poems, we shall only mention one, exhibiting the first state of society presented to his eyes among

* The estate of Corehouse, near the Falls of Clyde, which gives a senatorial title to a gentleman of high birth and pre-eminent accomplishments, George Cranstoun, distinguished at the Scottish bar, and by his literary taste and productions, was purchased with the reversion of the price of Ednam by James Edmondstone, the surviving brother of the family, who had several sisters alive at the time. One of them married Theodore, King of Corsica, and had fortunately no children; all the rest died unmarried; and the last was buried only a few years ago, being upwards of a hundred years of age, a striking representative of the "auld race" of the Edmondstones. Lord Corehouse was related through the females; one of the first Knight of Newton's daughters having married the Master of Cranstoun, Lord C.'s ancestor, and the other the Laird of Ednam.

his father's parishioners much more than a century ago, and resembling those phases elsewhere which taught his young idea how to shoot the glowing sketch of squirearchy revels. The laird, it appears, had a terrible dislike "to the rowting and skirling of the congregation," as he irreverently termed the Scottish psalmody; and as his abode was very near the kirk, the loud singing on a Sunday morning was very apt to disturb his complacent slumbers, and prevent his sleeping off the debauch of "Saturday at e'en." To get rid of the nuisance, he built another place of worship, and a miserable hovel it was, at a greater distance from his residence; and it was only within the present century that, on its becoming ruinous, the kirk of Thomson's infancy was restored to its proper site in the churchyard of Ednam.

James Thomson was born, as we have said, at Ednam, in September, 1700; but, on the very threshold of our biography, we stumble upon two different dates for that event, so "important in a man's life." Murdoch, Dr. Johnson, and others quote the 7th, Sir Harris Nicolas the 11th of the month. To ascertain the exact day, we have referred to the register or sessions book; but that oracle is silent on the fact. We are inclined, however, to adopt the 7th, in consequence of finding the following entry:—"1700. Mr. Thomas Thomson's son James baptised, September 15th day." Now, as in Scotland it is seldom or never the custom, unless a child be dangerously sickly (which in this case there is no cause to suspect), to baptise it so early as four days after its birth, the probability is all in favour of the earlier date. When he was about three years old, his father was translated to the pastoral charge of Southdean, some twelve miles distant, and on the banks of his own "sylvan Jed." This change brought him into the immediate neighbourhood of his immortalised friend, the Reverend Robert Riccarton of Hobkirk, which became the most important and propitious event of his whole future life.

As with regard to the date of his birth, so do his biographers differ as to the name of his mother; one stating it to be Hume, and another Trotter, the daughter of Mr. Trotter of Fogo (Sir H. Nicolas). It was Hume; and she was co-heiress of Widehope, or Wideopen, a small property in Roxburghshire,

but lying amid lovely scenery at Grubet, on the Kale Water, which flows into the Teviot between Kelso and Jedburgh ; and the house, we believe, is still in existence. It is remarkable how often we trace genius to the character and influence of the mother, rather than to the instruction and example of the father. A vast majority of great men seem to owe their eminence to nature acting through maternal love ; nor was Thomson an exception to the rule. His mother appears to have been a woman of no common endowments. The warmth of her imagination and devotional feelings were scarcely inferior to those of her son, and it is more than probable that to her immediate direction of his mind in infancy, succeeded by the cares of a pious father, he owed that species of training which imbued him so deeply with the beauties of creation and the sublimities of God's revealed word, apparent in the kindling glow of thought and oriental dignity of diction which pervade his poetry.

In the school of Jedburgh he received his boyish education ; and though he drew his landscape scenes in general from nature's universal face, rather than from favourite localities, however

“ Meet nurse for a poetic child,”

there can be no doubt that the sweet haunts of his morning of life,—the pensive, retired, and romantic retreats which abound about his childhood's home,—the solemn and sacred seat of learning in his “school ile” in the venerable abbey—all tended to that inspiration which has made him an everlasting name. It is told by some of our precursors, that his teacher discovered in him nothing superior to the common lot of vulgar scholars ; but one anecdote seems to refute this assertion. On one occasion when the Latin task (dry to a fancy like his) was indifferently performed, and called forth a sharp rebuke, he appeared to be sadly humbled ; and some time after, as the master passed by, he caught him conning it over again, with the half-suppressed exclamation, as it rose from the heart of the delinquent, “Confound the building of Babel !”

Yet, though the poet sung of Nature in all her widely spread beauty and magnificence, he did not at times disdain to descant gracefully on her humbler features, and celebrate the site of his nativity, — laved by lovely streams, studded with spots of

sequestered peacefulness, and variegated by a few features of wild and imposing aspect. He invoked his Muse to look down from Caledonia's awful grandeur upon

" Her fertile vales,
With many a cool translucent brimming flood
Wash'd lovely, from the Tweed, pure parent stream,
Whose pastoral banks first taught my Doric reed,
With sylvan Jed, thy tributary stream."

And though the Tweed and the Jed are thus rendered classic by the poet, yet the romantic banks of the Ale have also potent claims upon the interest of his admirers. Within the vale through which it takes its course, between Longnewton House and Ancrum Manse, resided one of his earliest friends, the Rev. John Cranston of Ancrum, the great confidant of Riccarton. This formed his favourite walk, and was worthy of his choice ; and the impression of its natural attractions, hallowed by sincere affections, never faded from his memory. Witness one of his letters from London to Mr. Cranston :—

" Now I imagine you seized with a fine romantic kind of melancholy at the fading of the year. Now I figure you wandering philosophical and pensive amidst the brown withered groves while the leaves rustle under your feet, and the sun gives a farewell parting gleam, and the birds

‘ Stir the faint note, and but attempt to sing.’

Then again, when the heavens wear a more gloomy aspect, the winds whistle, and the waters spout, I see you in the well-known *Cleugh* (a name still given to the locality), beneath the solemn arch of tall thick embowering trees, listening to the amusing lull of the many steep moss-grown cascades—while deep divine Contemplation, the genius of the place, prompts each swelling awful thought. * * * There I walk in spirit, and disport in the beloved gloom."

Are not these the reflections of his own young habits and enjoyments ? The spirit which conceived the noble address to Philosophic Melancholy near the conclusion of Autumn is here traceable to its source, as it is embodied in the recollections of his early wanderings about the rural *Cleugh*.

But there are incidents of a more sportive kind, the tradition

of which attach to this spot. The caves with which the banks of the Ale abound could not but attract his attention ; and one of them, near Ancrum Manse, is associated with his name in an amusing and characteristic manner. His friend, the minister, a man of much firmer nerve than he, frequently retired for study to this cave, difficult as it was of ingress and egress, and the old inhabitants of the village knew it by the name of Cranston's Cave ; not Thomson's, as has since been supposed. One evening, when the poet was his guest, he persuaded him to visit his rock-formed study, and, with much toil, managed to pilot him down the steep that led to it, and place him safe in his rustic chair within. But to extricate him was another task, the

*" Revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor est,"*

and for a time utterly hopeless. No sooner did the eye of Thomson catch the high perpendicular cliff, and the turbulent stream below, overhung by the horrid ledge on which he gasped, than all his courage failed, and it ultimately required more aid than the entreaty and example of his reverend guide to extricate him from his sorrowful situation. And such was the shock his finely toned nerves received that sleep was banished from his pillow, and fever was nearly the consequence.

Whilst mentioning these local scenes, we may remark that many of the admirers of the poet of the Seasons are not aware of the interesting fact that the summit of Ruberslaw, a bold conical hill which rises near the junction of the Rule and the Teviot, was the favourite spot which filled his mind with the finest images in his poem of " Winter." It commands a glorious prospect ; and no persons, even of common sensibility, can lift their eyes to the sweeping majesty of the Liddersdale, Cheviot, or Lammermuir mountains, or drop them on the rich diversified beauty of the valleys below, without feeling that this was indeed a throne suited to the genius of the illustrious bard. And here beneath, at his feet, was his youthful sanctuary with his friend Riccarton, the first who discovered, cherished, and directed his noble powers. This estimable man (as we learn from Thomson's letter to Cranston) did much more than superintend his studies, and encourage his pursuits. He, too, was

a poet, as well as a deep divine and well-informed philosopher. Often did they write verses and criticise them together; and doom to the flames, with extemporary requiems, such compositions as were considered unworthy of a better fate. On one memorable occasion the elder produced to the younger bard some lines on the subject of winter—the first idea of that splendid song which achieved his future immortality. “Nature (he writes, in the letter already alluded to) delights me in every form. I am now painting her in her most lugubrious dress for my own amusement—describing winter as it presents itself. Mr. Riccarton’s poem on Winter, which I still have, first put the design into my head; in it are some *masterly strokes* that *awakened me*.” What comes of the statement in Warton’s edition of Pope, that the idea of the “Seasons” was taken from Pope’s four pastorals?

Near Hobkirk Manse, in a quiet woody glen, there is still to be seen the favourite resort of these two distinguished individuals. But the lofty mountain was more congenial to the range of Thomson’s boundless imagination. The snow storm gathering round the summit of Ruberslaw was the prototype of the tempest queen in the beginning of “Winter;” and Leyden, his brother bard,* who knew and felt this, has aptly described the scenes you contemplate on this classic ground, and the effects they were calculated to produce on the soul of their future poet. Thus,

“He sees with strange delight the snow clouds form
Where Ruberslaw conceives the mountain storm;
Dark Ruberslaw, that lifts his head sublime,
Rugged and hoary with the spoils of Time:
On his broad misty front the giant wears
The horrid furrows of ten thousand years.

* We may well designate them so, for in many respects the history of Thomson and Leyden is remarkably similar. They were born in the same county, most of their youth was spent in the same neighbourhood, both displayed early poetic taste and genius, wooed the Muses on the same ground, loved their native land to enthusiasm, studied for the church and relinquished it for literature, depended on their own exertions for success, left works behind them alike prized for purity and talent, were beloved in life, and died in the full enjoyment of their powers and fame.

Such were the scenes his fancy first refined,
And breath'd enchantment o'er his plastic mind,
Bade every feeling flow to virtue dear,
And formed the poet of the varied year." *

For a short while previous to leaving the resorts of his boyhood and early years for the University of Edinburgh, Thomson resided at Hobkirk and Ancrum. In one memoir it is stated that a servant of his father took him to the capital, seated behind him on horseback; but such was his reluctance to quit the country, that he had no sooner been left to himself in the city than he set out on foot for home, and was back at his father's house (between 50 and 60 miles) as soon as the man and horse. When his parents remonstrated, he passionately observed that he could study as well on the haughs of Sou'dean (Southdean) as in Edinburgh; or in plainer words, "I can read as well here as in schools." He was, however, prevailed upon to return to Edinburgh, and commence his theological studies there.

During the second year of his admission, these studies were interrupted by the sudden death of his father, to whose bed he hastened, but too late to receive his blessing,—a circumstance which, it is stated, affected him in an extraordinary degree, and occasioned him great filial sorrow. His mother having consulted with Mr. Gusthart, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and senior of the Chapel Royal, resolved to mortgage her moiety of Widehope (congenial name!), and repair with her numerous family to the capital, and there live in a frugal manner till James, whose promise was already cheering to the widow's heart, had finished his academical education. The latter, during his vacation, used to pass his time between the seat of Sir William Bennet, of refined taste and poetical fancy, and the manse of Mr. Riccarton; and it is related that the pieces which he then composed were doomed to submit to the fate of his earlier verses with Mr. Riccarton (if, indeed, the two stories do not refer to one period), and perish in the flames

* The summit of Ruberslaw would be a splendid sight for a monument to commemorate the poets connected by their birth and lives with its gigantic foundations and sublime rocky architecture,—Thomson, Leyden, Scott; not forgetting Riccarton.

with a solemn metrical recital of the demerits which caused their condemnation.

At this period the public feeling in regard to poetry was directly the reverse to what it is in our day. An Augustan age in England had diffused the love of verse into the northern regions, and native talent had a chance of being cherished and admired. Thomson's efforts had evidently made a sensation in several quarters; and he soon felt that the only field for the fair essay of his powers was London, where Pope and Addison and other immortals wrote and sang, and were patronised. His removal thither is said to have been hastened by an accident. "The divinity chair of Edinburgh was filled by the Rev. and learned Mr. Hamilton, universally respected and beloved, and particularly endeared to the young students of divinity under his charge by his kind offices, candour, and affability. Our author had attended his lectures about a year, when there was given him for an exercise a psalm in which the power and majesty of God are proclaimed. Of this psalm he produced a paraphrase and illustration, as required by his task, but in a style so highly poetical as to surprise the whole audience. Mr. Hamilton, as was his custom, complimented the orator upon his performance, and pointed out to his fellow students the most striking and masterly passages; but at last, turning to Mr. Thomson, he told him, smiling, that if he thought of being useful in the ministry, he must keep a stricter rein upon his imagination, and express himself in language more intelligible to an ordinary congregation."

What poet could endure such depressing criticism? Not our bard; who shortly after took the hint, abandoned his precarious prospects in the church, and prepared, under some vague encouragement (said to be given by Lady Grizzel Baillie as a friend of his mother, but producing no practical good), for a journey to London; there, like many a less gifted man, to try his hap in the struggle of the million for fortune and distinction.

He arrived in the metropolis in 1725, and in the twenty-fifth year of his age. To the exaggerated and unfeeling description of his poor estate by Dr. Johnson we have before alluded; and perhaps the most certain and distinct method of portraying his real condition will be to republish a letter which appeared

30th of April, 1797, in the first number of the *Kelso Mail*,* the first literary essay of James Ballantyne, aided by Sir Walter Scott; and of which document the introductory history, written by Ballantyne and the Rev. Mr. Robert Lundie, possesses not a little biographical interest.

"Doctor Cranston (they write), to whom this letter is addressed, appears to have been the companion of the early youth, and the confidant of the mature life of Thomson. He was son of the gentleman who was then minister of Ancrum, on whose death Mr. John Cranston, another of his sons, succeeded to that office. Dr. Cranston having died soon after his father, all his papers fell into the hands of his brother, who lived to an advanced age in the pastoral charge of Ancrum; and at his death, which happened a few years ago, both his own and his brother's manuscripts came into the possession of his surviving family. From that period the letter lay unnoticed amongst lumber till lately, when it was taken out by a maid servant, and devoted by her to the purpose of packing up some candlesticks, which were sent to this place (Kelso) to be exchanged. The person into whose hands it thus fell (Mr. William Muir, junior, a coppersmith) fortunately discovered its value, and has obligingly furnished us with it on the present occasion. The copy we have taken, and which is now subjoined, is exact and literal; the spelling, punctuation, and even the errors of the original, being scrupulously preserved.

"The public will perceive that this interesting epistle is without date, and is signed only with initials.† But, independently of the simple narrative of the means by which it has been rescued from oblivion, it seems to carry along with it such intrinsic marks of authenticity, that no one who is in the least acquainted with the peculiar character of the productions of Thomson, can hesitate a moment in ascribing it to him. Besides gratifying that laudable curiosity which the public naturally feel

* The establishment of this journal was warmly advised and supported by my father, and had a powerful effect in stemming the tide of ultra-democracy, which had already a violent partisan in the proprietor and editor of the only newspaper published in the place. It was the height of the French republican mania, and the popular ferment was of fearful intensity.—W. J.

† From the post-mark it seems to have been written from Barnet.

to become acquainted with the most minute circumstances in the lives of eminent men, we consider this letter as peculiarly interesting in many other points of view. It appears to have been written at a most critical period of the author's life; being soon after his arrival in England, whither he went upon the death of his mother. It exhibits the interesting spectacle of an elegant and inexperienced mind labouring under the pressure of pecuniary embarrassments, and struggling with those feelings of conscious dignity by which he had long been prevented from soliciting assistance, and which the horrors of impending indigence alone enabled him to overcome. But the account he then proceeds to give of the origin and partial progress of 'THE SEASONS' more nearly concerns the public; and merits the attention not only of the biographer, whom it enables to throw light on an obscure part of the history of this work, but also of the philosopher, whom it must forcibly impress with the reflection that the most trivial circumstances sometimes affect the whole tenor of a man's life, and that by causes apparently the most inefficient his fame and fortune may be for ever decided, as well as the nature and extent of his influence on mankind. Had not Mr. Reccleton [Riccarton], a man who is now altogether unknown as a poet, composed a small production on Winter; the immortal 'SEASONS' might never have existed; and thus not only might Scotland have derived comparatively small lustre from the genius of her Thomson, but the world might never have been delighted with the enchanting imagery and glowing descriptions of the Poet of the Year."

" 'Dear Sir,

" 'I would chide you for the slackness of your correspondence; but having blamed you wrongeously last time, I shall say nothing 'till I hear from you, which I hope will be soon.

" 'Ther's a little business I would communicate to you, befor I come to the more entertaining part of our correspondence.

" 'I'm going (hard task!) to complain, and beg your assistance. When I came up here I brought very little along w^t me; expecting some more, upon the selling of Widehope, which was to have been sold that day my mother was buried. now 'tis unsold yet, but will be disposed of, as soon as it can be conve-

niently done : tho' indeed 'tis perplex'd w^t some difficulties. I was a long time here living att my own charges, and you know how expensive that is ; this together with my furnishing of myself w^t cloaths, linnens, one thing and another to fitt me for any business of this nature here, necessarily oblig'd me to contract some debt. being a stranger here, 'tis a wonder how I got any credit, but, I can't expect 'twill be long sustained ; unless I immediately clear it. even now I believe it is at a crisis. My friends have no money to send me, till the land is sold : and my creditors will not wait till then. You know what the consequence would be. Now the assistance I would beg of you, and which I know if in your power you won't refuse me, is, a letter of credit on some merchant, banker, or such like person in London, for the matter of twelve pounds, 'till I get the money upon the selling of the land which I'm, att last, certain off, if you could either give me it yourself, or procure it ; tho' you don't owe it to my merit, yet, you owe it to your own nature, which I know so well as to say no more on the subject ; only allow me to add, that when I first fell upon such a project (the only thing I have for it in present circumstances) knowing the selfish inhumane temper of the generality of the world ; you were the first person that offer'd to my thoughts, as one, to whom I had the confidence to make such an address.

“Now I imagine you seized w^t a fine, romantic kind of melancholy, on the fading of the year. now I figure you wandering, philosophical, and pensive, amidst the brown, wither'd groves : while the leaves rustle under your feet, the sun gives a farewell parting gleam, and the birds

‘Stir the faint note and but attempt to sing ;’

then again when the heavns wear a more gloomy aspect ; the winds whistle, and the waters spout, I see you in the well-known cleugh beneath the solemn arch of tall thick embowring trees, listning to the amusing lull of the many steep, moss-grown cascades, while deep, divine contemplation, the genius of the place, prompts each swelling awful thought. I'm sure you would not resign your part in that scene att an easy rate. none

e'er enjoy'd to the height you do, and you're worthy of it. ther I walk in spirit, and disport in its beloved gloom. This country I am in is not very entertaining. no variety but that of woods, and them we have in abundance. but where is the living stream ? the airy mountain ? and the hanging rock ? with twenty other things that elegantly please the lover of nature ? Nature delights me in every form, I am just now painting her in her most lugubrious dress ; for my 'own amusement, describing winter, as it presents itself after my first proposal of the subject,

' I sing of winter & his gelid reign
Nor let a rhyming insect of the spring
Deem it a barren theme. to me 'tis full
Of manly charms ; to me who court the shade,
Whom the gay seasons suit not, and who shun
The glare of summer. Welcome ! kindred glooms !
Drear awfull, wintry horrors, welcome all &c.'

After this introduction, I say, which insists for a few lines further I prosecute the purport of the following ones

' Nor can I O departing summer ! choose
But consecrate one pitying line to you ;
Sing your last temp'd days, and sunny calms,
That cheer the spirits and serene the soul.'

Then terrible floods, and high winds that usually happen about this time of the year, and have already happen'd here (I wish you have not felt them too dreadfully) the first produced the enclosed lines ; the last are not completed. Mr. Rickleton's poem on Winter, which I still have, first put the design into my head. in it are some masterly strokes that awaken'd me. being only a present amusement, 'tis ten to one but I drop it whene'er another fancy comes cross.

" ' I believe it had been much more for your entertainment, if in this letter I had cited other people instead of myself : but I must refer that 'till another time. If you have not seen it already, I have just now in my hands an original of S^r Alexander Brands (the craz'd scots knight w^t the woful countenance) you would relish. I belive it might make mis John catch hold of his knees, which I take in him to be a degree of mirth, only inferiour, to falling back again with an elastic spring 'tis very

. * printed in the evening Post : so perhaps you have seen these panegyrics of our declining bard ; one on the Princesses birth day, the other on his Majesty's in† cantos ; they're written in the spirit of a complicated craziness.

“ ‘ I was in London lately a night ; and in the old play house saw a comedy acted, called, Love makes a man, or the Fops Fortune, where I beheld Miller and Cibber, shine to my infinite entertainment. in and about London this month of Sept. near a hundred people have dy'd by accident and suicide. there was one blacksmith tyr'd of the hammer, who hang'd himself and left written behind him this concise epitaph

‘ I. Joe Pope
liv'd w^tout hope
And dy'd by a rope’

or else some epigrammatic muse has bely'd him.

[The following is written upon the margin :—]

“ ‘ Mr. Muir has ample fund for politicks, in the present posture of affairs, as you'll find by the public news. I should be glad to know that great minister's frame just now. keep it to yourself. You may whisper it too in Mess John's ear.—far otherwise is his lately mysterious B^r M^r. Tait employed.—Started a superannuated fortune and just now upon the full scent.—'tis comical enough to see him from amongst the rubbish of his controversial divinity and politics furbishing up his antient rusty gallantry

“ ‘ Yours sincerely J. T.

“ ‘ Remember me to all friends. Mr. Rickle, Mis John, B^r John, &c.

This interesting letter throws a full light upon the most obscure portion of Thomson's London career ; but it also leads directly to reflections most honourable to his filial and domestic affections. It appears that while yet a student in Edinburgh, from his mother, left as stated a widow with a large family, and in very limited circumstances, he could receive but little pecuniary aid, small as is the aid required in that condition ; and

* A word is here obliterated.

† Obliterated.

the bare idea of augmenting the affliction of bereavement by accelerating poverty in one so justly beloved, could not but weigh heavily on his affectionate nature. Yet he relinquished the profession for which he was intended ; and risking all, with true poetic fervour and hope, braved every obstacle, and rushed to the only arena where that fervour could be nourished, and that hope realised. Thus do we find him in the great metropolis, —foregone all the endearing charities of home, the delights of long-tried friendship, and the land of his nativity, where he had wooed the muse with such impassioned fondness,—we find him in the busy bustling world, a stranger, robbed of his credentials, and the very child of cheerless adventure. What could and did sustain him ? The light of Poesy from Heaven ; the soul within, and imagination all compact, which looked beyond the ignorant present, and beamed and radiated in the anticipated glory of futurity. The genuine bard may be depressed, but he will not despond : if all the realities of life are against him, has he not creation at his will, and the power to make another and a better world for himself ?

Such was the position of the great Poet of Nature, at the very time he was elaborating the composition of "Winter;" and that he felt what we have expressed, his own words abundantly declare. And we know not whether most to admire the touching delicacy of his application for succour, or the firmness with which he contemplates the sure result and triumph of his genius.

D, p. 16.

His obituary thus notes the career of this son, exemplifying every fine filial quality which distinguishes the Scottish people, and a brother most dearly beloved.

Died, on the 8th of January, at Cape Town, on his passage from India, Lieut.-Colonel JOHN STUART JERDAN, of the Bombay Infantry, and of Kelso, in Roxburghshire. After many years of important services, having earned the repeated thanks of the Governor-General, medals, and other distinctions, his career closed where it commenced, with military honour. As a Cadet

entering life, he was the first in the fleet to volunteer on the attack of the Cape of Good Hope ; as a Field Officer at its ending, his corpse was there carried to the grave by Field Officers, and buried with the ceremonies due to his rank, with the regrets paid, even by strangers, to his character as a gallant officer, and a most estimable man.

E, p. 54.

Almost every member of the College of Justice, however great as lawyers and learned as scholars, was at and a little before this period, noted for some peculiarity of character, if not for eccentricity. They had finished their education about the time George the Third began to reign, and that was a rough and strange time all over Scotland. Their confined studies had not thrown them into the converse of the general world, to enlarge their views and modify their opinions ; and, consequently, whatever was original in them grew with their growth and strengthened with their years. The annexed humorous picture of their oddities and modes of expression can hardly be called caricature. It was ascribed to an estimable and polished advocate, who has succeeded to a seat on the same bench which they occupied, and on which his associates have been Jeffrey, Cockburn, Robertson, and other distinguished men. The *jeu d'esprit* purports to be "Notes taken at advising the action of Damages and Defamation, Alexander C——m (Cunningham), Jeweller, in Edinburgh, against Mr. James R——ll (Russell), surgeon there. By G. C. (Cranstoun) Esq." and the judgment, pronounced *seriatim*, is so intrinsically droll that no lapse of years can impair its humour, especially if considered generally applicable to the legal verbiage and straw-splitting which mars the course of justice, and a lively and accurate sketch of a state of things that can never be seen again. The series begins with Lord President Campbell, who would reverse Lord Balmuto's (the Lord Ordinary's) decision, and declares :— *

* The second speaker is Lord Meadowbank, the third Lord Hermand, the fourth Cumming (I think), the fifth Balmuto, the sixth Woodhouselee, the seventh J. C. R. (Lord Methuen), the eighth Polkemmet.

"Your Lordships have Petition of Alex. Cunningham against Lord B——s Interlocutor. It is a case of Defamation and Damages for calling the Petitioner's Diamond Beetle an Egyptian Louse.

"You have the Lord Ordinary's very distinct Interlocutor on pages 29 and 30 of the petition: 'Having considered the condescendence of the Pursuer, answers for the Defendant, and so on, finds in respect it is not alleged that the diamonds on the back of the Diamond Beetle are real diamonds, or any thing but shining spots, such as are found on other Diamond Beetles, which likewise occur, though in a smaller number of other Beetles, somewhat different from the Beetle libelled, similar to which there may be Beetles in Egypt, with shining spots on their backs, which may be termed Lice there, and may be different not only from the common Louse mentioned by Moses as one of the plagues of Egypt, which is admitted to be a filthy, troublesome Louse, even worse than the said Louse which is clearly different from the Louse libelled; but the other Louse is the same with or similar to the said Beetle, which is also the same with the other Beetle, and although different from the said Beetle libelled, yet as the same Beetle is similar to the other Beetle, and the said Louse to said Beetle, and the said Beetle to the other Louse libelled, and the said Louse to the other Beetle, which is the same with or similar to the Beetle which somewhat resembles the Beetle libelled, assolizes the Defender, and finds expences due.'

Say away, my Lords.

Lord M—b—k. "This is a very intricate and puzzling question, my Lord. I have formed no decided opinion, but at present I am rather inclined to think the Interlocutor is right, though not upon the ratio assigned in it. It appears to me there are two points for consideration: 1st. Whether the words libelled amount to a convicium against the Beetle. 2d. Admitting the convicium, whether the Pursuer is entitled to found upon it in this action.

"Now, my Lord, if there be a convicium at all, it consists in the comparatio, or comparison of the Scarabæus, or Beetle, with the Egyptian Pediculus, or Louse. The first doubt regards this point, but it is not at all founded on what the Defender alleges,

that there is no such animal as an Egyptian *Pediculus* in rerum natura; for though it does not actually exist, it may possibly exist, and whether its existence is in esse or posse is the same to this question, provided there be termini habiles for ascertaining what it would be if it did exist. But my doubt lies here—How am I to discover what is the essentia of any Louse, whether Egyptian or not? It is very easy to describe it by its accidents as a naturalist, Aptera (or that it is a little, filthy, yellow, greedy, despicable reptile); but we do not learn from this what the proprium of the animal is in a logical sense, and still less what are its differentia. Now without these it is impossible to judge whether there is a convicium or not; for in a case of this kind, which sapit naturam delicti, we must take the words in meliori sensu, and presume the comparatio to be in melioribus tantum. And I here beg that the parties, and the bar, and general—(Interrupted by Lord H—m—d,— ‘Your Lordship should address yourself to the chair.’) I say, my Lord, I beg it may be understood that I do not rest my opinion upon the ground that veritas convicii excusat: I am clear that although the Beetles actually were an Egyptian *Pediculus*, it would afford no relevant defence, providing the calling it so were a convicium; and there my doubt lies.

“With regard to the 2d point, I am satisfied that the *Scarabæus*, or Beetle himself, has no persona standi in judicio, and therefore the Pursuer cannot insist in the name of the *Scarabæus*, or for his behoof. If the action lies at all, it must be at the instance of the Pursuer himself, as the Verus Dominus of the *Scarabæus*, for being calumniated through the convicium directed principally against the animal standing in that relation to him. Now abstracting from the qualification of an actual damnum, which is not alleged, I have great doubts whether a mere convicium is necessarily transmitted from one object to another through the relation of a damnum subsisting between them; and if not necessarily transmissible, we must see the principle of its actual transmission here, and that has not yet been pointed out.

Lord H—m—d. “We heard a little ago, my Lord, that this is a difficult case. I have not been fortunate enough, for my own part, to find out where the difficulty lies. Will any man

presume to tell me that a Beetle is not a Beetle, and that a Louse is not a Louse? I never saw the Petitioner's Beetle, and what is more, I don't care whether I ever see it or not; but I suppose it's like other Beetles, and that's enough for me.

"But, my Lord, I know the other reptile well. I have seen them, my Lord—I have felt them ever since I was a child in my mother's arms; and my mind tells me that nothing but the deepest and blackest malice rankling in the human heart could have suggested this comparison, or led any man to form a thought so injurious and insulting. But, my Lord, there is more here than all that—a great deal more. One would think that the Defender could have gratified his spite to the full by comparing this Beetle to a common Louse—an animal sufficiently vile and abominable for the purpose of defamation.—Shut that outer door there.—He adds, my Lord, the epithet 'Egyptian.' I well know what he means by that epithet—he means, my Lord, a Louse which has fattened in the head of a gipsy or tinker, undisturbed by the comb, and unmolested in the enjoyment of its native filth. He means a Louse ten times larger and ten times more abominable than those with which your Lordship or I am familiar. The Petitioner asks redress for this injury so atrocious and so aggravated, and as far as my voice goes, he shall not ask it in vain.

Lord C——g. "I am of the opinion last delivered. It appears to me slanderous and calumnious to compare a Diamond Beetle to the filthy and mischievous animal libelled. By an Egyptian Louse I understand one which has been found in the head of a native Egyptian, a race of men who, after degenerating for many centuries, have sunk at last into the abyss of depravity in consequence of having been subjugated for a time by the French. I do not find that Turgot, or Condorcet, or the rest of the economists, ever reckoned combing the head a species of productive labour. I conclude, therefore, that wherever French principles have been propagated, lice grow to an immoderate size, especially in a warm climate like that of Egypt. I shall only add, that we ought to be sensible of the blessings we enjoy under a free and happy Constitution, where Lice and men live under the restraints of equal laws—the only equality that can exist in a well-regulated state.

Lord B—l—to. “Awm for refusing the petition. There more Lice nor Beetles in Fife. They call Beetles Clokes there. I thought when I read the petition, that the Beetle, or Bettle, had been the thing that the women has when they are washing towels or napery, and things for dadding them with. And I see this Petitioner is a jeweller till his trade, and I thought that he had made one of thir Beetles, and set it all round with diamonds, and I thought it an extravagant and foolish idea; and I see no resemblance it could have to a Louse. But I find I was mistaken, my Lord, and I find it is only a Beetle Cloke the Petitioner has; but my opinion’s the same it was before. I say, my Lord, Awm for refusing the petition I say.

L—d W—se—lee. “There’s a case abridged in the third Volume of the Dictionary of Decisions, (Chalmers versus Donglas,) in which it was found that *veritas convicii excusat*, which may be rendered not literally, but in a free and spirited manner, according to the most approved principles of translation, ‘The truth of a calumny affords a relevant defence.’ If, therefore, it be the law of Scotland, which I am clearly of opinion it is, that the truth of a calumny affords a relevant defence; and if it be likewise true that the Diamond Beetle is really an Egyptian Louse, I am really inclined to conclude, though certainly the case is attended with difficulty, that the Defender ought to be assoilzied.—Refuse.

Lord J. C. R—s. “I am very well acquainted with the Defender in this action, and have a great respect for him, and esteem him likewise. I know him to be a skilful and expert surgeon, and also a good man, and I would do a great deal to serve him, or to be of use to him, if I had it in my power to do so; but I think on this occasion that he has spoken rashly, and, I fear, foolishly and improperly. I hope he had no bad intention—I am sure he had not. But the Petitioner, for whom I have likewise a great respect, has a Clock, or a Beetle—I think it is called a Diamond Beetle—which he is very fond of, and has a fancy for; and the Defender has compared it to a Louse, or a Bug, or a Flea, or something of that kind, with a view to make it despicable or ridiculous, and the Petitioner so likewise, as the proprietor or owner of it. It is said that this beast is a Louse in fact, and that the *veritas convicii excusat*.

And mention is made of a decision in the case of Chalmers against Douglas. I have always had a great veneration for the decisions of your Lordship, and I am sure will always continue to have while I sit here ; but that case was determined by a very small majority, and I have heard your Lordships mention it on various occasions, and you have always desiderated the propriety of it, and I think have departed from it in some instances. I remember the circumstances of the case very well. Helen Chalmers lived in Musselburgh, and the Defender, Mrs. Baillie, lived in Fisher Row. And at that time there was much intercourse between the genteel inhabitants of Musselburgh, and Fisher Row, and Inveresk, and Newbigging ; and there were balls, or dances, or assemblies, every fortnight, and also sometimes, I believe, every week. And there were likewise card-assemblies once a fortnight, or oftener, and the young people danced there also, and others played at cards ; and there were various refreshments, such as tea and coffee, and butter and bread, and I believe, but I am not sure, porter and negus, and likewise small-beer. And it was at one of these assemblies that Mrs. Baillie called Mrs. Chalmers a ———, or an aduress, and said she had lain with Commissioner Carnel, a gentleman whom I knew well at one time, and had a great deal of respect for ; — he is dead many years ago. And Mrs. Chalmers brought an action of defamation before the Commissaries, and it came by advocacy into this Court ; and your Lordships allowed a proof of the veritas convicii, and it lasted a long time, and answered in the end no good purpose even to the Defender himself, while it did much harm to the character of the Pursuer.

“ I am, therefore, for refusing such a proof in this case ; and I think the Petitioner and his Beetle have been slandered, and the petition ought to be seen.

Lord P—k—t. “ It should be observed, my Lords, that what is called a Beetle is a reptile well known in this country. I have seen mony a ane o’ them on Drumsherlin Muir. It’s a little black beastie about the size o’ my thoom-nail. The country-people ca’ them Cloks, and I believe they ca’ them also Maggy wi’ the mony feet. But this is no the least like any Louse I ever saw ; so that in my opinion, though the Defender may

have made a blunder through ignorance in comparing them, there does not seem to me to have been any animus injurandi ; therefore I am for refusing the petition, my Lord.

" *Lord M—n.* If I understand this—a—a—Interlocutor, it is not said that the—a—a—Egyptian Lice are Beetles, but that they may be, or—a—a—a—resemble Beetles. I am, therefore, for sending this process to the Ordinary to ascertain that fact, as I think it depends upon that whether there be—a—a—a—convicium or not. I think also that the Petitioner should be ordained to—a—a—a—produce his Beetle, and the a—a—a—Defender an Egyptian Louse ; and if he has not one, he should take a diligence—a—a—a—to recover Lice of various kinds, and these may be—a—a—a—remitted to—a—a—a—Dr. Monro, or to—a—a—a—Mr. Playfair, or to other naturalists, to report upon the subject."—Agreed to.

F, p. 111.

THE SLEEPLESS WOMAN.

" Blessed be he that first invented sleep, for it covers a man all over like a mantle."—*Sancho Panza, passim.*

Heavily set in massive brass, whose rich and ingenious carving was tarnished and dull, a ponderous lamp swung from a ceiling blackened by its smoke. Every thing in the room spoke of time, but of time that had known no change. Knights, whose armour was, at the latest, of two centuries back—ladies, in dresses from which their descendants started in dismay—looked out from the discoloured tapestry ; and the floor, dark with age, added to the gloom. Beside the hearth, whose fire, from the rain beating down the huge chimney, burnt every moment dimmer, sat two old domestics. The man in a scarlet gown, and a belt, from which hung a heavy bunch of keys, was the seneschal ; and opposite was his wife, in a brown silk dress, and a string of ebony beads, which she was busily employed in counting. Between them was a small antique old table, where a flask and two bell-mouthed glasses appeared temptations

which, it must be owned, somewhat interrupted the telling of the beads. In the centre of the chamber stood an immense hearse-like bed ; the purple velvet curtains swept to the ground, and at each corner drooped a large plume of black ostrich-feathers. On this bed lay a little withered old man, apparently in the last extremity of age, and very close upon the border of death. His spare form was hidden in an ample black robe, fastened round the waist with a white girdle, on which were graved strange characters in red ; and on his breast was a white square, covered with stars and signs wrought in gold. The old man's face was ghastly pale, and rendered yet paler by the contrast of his black scull-cap, which was drawn down even to his gray and shagged eyebrows. But the features were restless ; and the small keen eyes, though fast losing their brightness, were full of anxiety. The wind shook the tall narrow windows, and howled in the old trees of the avenue ; at every fresh gust the Baron's impatience seemed to increase—for what we are telling relates to the Baron de Launaye.

" 'Tis a rough night," muttered he ; " but Adolphe is as rough a rider—and a dangerous road ; but I am the first De Launaye who ever drew bridle for that. And then my summons—it was sure to reach him ; ay, though alone, in the midnight bower of the mistress whose name and his suspicion had never coupled together even in a dream—even though consciousness were drowned in the crimson flowing of the wine—though sleeping as men sleep after battle, pillowed on the body of their deadliest enemy, or of their nearest and dearest friend—my summons would be borne on his inmost soul. But will he come, at the bidding of his dying uncle ?—will Adolphe, he, the only human being whom I ever loved—will he or will he not come ! "

The question was answered even at the moment it was breathed. The horn at the castle-gate was blown impatiently—the fall of the drawbridge was heard—a moment's pause, and a light foot sprang up the oaken staircase with all the speed of haste and youth. The door opened, and in rushed a young cavalier. The white plumes of his cap were drenched with wet—the diamond clasp that fastened them was dim with damp—but his bright auburn hair glistened with the rain-drops. Hastily flinging his riding cloak, heavy with moisture, to the

ground, the stranger sprang to the bed-side. A gleam of human love, of human joy, passed over the old man's face, as, tenderly and gently, his nephew asked of his tidings, and expressed such hopes as affection hopes when hope there is none.

"Child of my love," murmured the dying Baron, "for whose sake only I have ever given one thought to the things of earth, bear yet a moment with the feeble wretch who but a brief while will stand between you and the title of your ancestors and wealth. Many a prince of your mother's house would think his kingdom overpaid if purchased by its half. You are young—I never was—my heart, even in boyhood, was old with premature knowledge. You have that beauty, the want of which has made my life a curse—you have that strength of body, the want of which has paralysed my strength of mind. I have doubted if happiness dwells on this evil earth—I will not doubt, when I hope for yours. You will hear me called necromancer : out on the base fools who malign that which they understand not, and would bring down the lofty aim of science, the glorious dream of virtue, to their own low level ! You will hear me called miser : Adolphe, have you ever found me so ?"

"My father—my more than father !" passionately exclaimed the young man, hiding his face on the pillow, as if ashamed of the violence of mortal grief, in the presence of one so soon to be immortal.

"Adolphe," continued his uncle, "you have heard, though not from me—for I sought not to weigh down your ardent mind with all that has pressed upon me with the burden of hopelessness, and long has the knowledge been mine—that the fetters of clay are too heavy for the spirit. Your young hand was fitter for the lance than the crucible ; and the bridle-rein would have been ill exchanged for the lettered scroll. But something I know of that future, into which even the sage can look but dimly. Adolphe, the only question I asked was for thee ! Alas ! the vanity of such wisdom ! It has told of danger that menaces, but not of the skill that avoids. My child evil came into the world with woman, and in her is bound up the evil of your destiny. Vain as the glance they throw on the polished steel of their mirror—false as the vow they make for the pleasure of breaking—inconstant as the wind, which changes from point to

point, and for whose change no philosophy hath ever discovered a cause : shun them, Adolphe, as you would disloyalty to your king, flight from your enemy, or falsehood to your friend."

The old man's voice became inaudible, and his head sank on Adolphe's shoulder :—"Margarita, water—or, Jacques, give me the wine." The youth tried to pour a few drops into the Baron's mouth. The dying man motioned back the glass, and, looking in the cavalier's face with a strong expression of affection and anxiety, muttered something of "woman" and "danger" — "bright," "eyes," "bright," "beware" — these were his last broken words. He expired.

Contrary to the charitable expectations of his neighbours, the Baron de Launaye was buried with all the rights of the church ; the holy water was sprinkled on the corse, and the holy psalm sung over the coffin. A marble tablet marked his grave ; and there the moonlight slept as lovingly as ever it did on the sinless tomb of saint or martyr. The new Baron de Launaye lamented his uncle's death in a very singular manner, for he was his heir—and the young and the rich have not much time for regret. But Adolphe (he was remarkable from a child for his memory) could not forget the kindness—and more than kindness—the love that his uncle had lavished on the little orphan, who noble and penniless at the age of five years, was left dependent on his bounty. However, sorrow cannot—indeed nothing in this world can—last for ever. Adolphe's grief became at first only sad ; next, melancholy ; thirdly, calm ; and, fourthly, settled down into a respectful remembrance, and a resolve to bear his uncle's last words in mind. Indeed, the muttered, vague, and uncertain prediction quite haunted him.

"I am sure," said he, in one of his many pondering moods, "I am sure my past experience confirms his words. I never got into a scrape but a woman was the cause. I had been in my outset at court, page to the Duke Forté d'Imhault, and gone with him on that splendid embassy to Russia, had he not been displeased with my awkwardness in fastening the duchess's sandal."

And he laughed as he said this : who in the world can guess, why the loss of his appointment should make the young Baron laugh !

“ And then who caused the duel between me and my Pylades, the Marquess de Lusignan, but that little jilt, Mdlle. Laure ? However, my sword only grazed his arm : he wore an exquisite blue silk scarf, and we were better friends than ever. Oh, my uncle was right : women were born to be our torment.”

Still was this conviction impressed on his mind like a duty. Yet he could not help thinking that a few bright eyes would light up the old hall better than the huge brazen lamps which now served to make darkness visible. From thinking of the pleasantness of such an illumination, he began to think of its difficulties ; and the difficulties of the project soon referred only to the place. One thought suggests another ; and from thinking how many obstacles opposed the introduction of bright eyes and sweet smiles into the castle, he arrived at the conclusion, how easily they were to be obtained in other parts.

To say the truth, Paris became daily more familiar to his mind's eye ; and, as he justly observed, staying at the dull old castle could do his uncle no good, and he was quite sure it did himself none. Now, in spite of philanthropy, people are not so very fond of doing good gratuitously ; but, to be sure, such doctrines were not so much discussed in those days as they are in ours, though the practice was about the same. Sometimes he argued with himself, “ it is as well to be out of harm's way ; ” —and the prediction and a cold shudder came together. But we are ready enough to dare the danger we do not know ; and though a few years of Parisian life had placed the nephew's early on a level with the uncle's late experience, touching the evil inherent in womanhood, nevertheless Adolphe supposed their bad qualities might be borne, at all events, better than the dulness of the Château de Launaye.

One day riding with his bridle on his horse's neck, meditating whether his next ride should not be direct to Paris, a most uncommon spectacle in that unfrequented part of the country attracted his attention. This was a large lumbering coach, drawn by six horses, whose rich harness and housings bore the crest in gold—a lynx rampant. A very natural curiosity (by-the-by all curiosity is natural enough), made him look in at the window. Was there ever a face half so beautiful as that of the girl who, like himself, actuated by natural curiosity,

looked out as he looked in ? The black silk wimple was drawn over her head, but allowed a very red upper lip—an exquisite Grecian nose—and a most brilliant pair of eyes, to be seen. Our young cavalier sat as if he had been stupified. This is a very common effect of love at first. It goes off, however—so it did with Adolphe. His first act on recovering his senses was to gallop after the coach. He spurred on, and caught a second glance of the most radiant orbs that ever revolved in light. Large, soft, clear, and hazel, as those of a robin—they were bright and piercing as those of a falcon. Certainly De Launaye had never seen such eyes before, or at least none that ever took such an effect upon him.

He ate no dinner that day—walked by moonlight on the terrace—and the only thing which excited his attention was the seneschal's information, that the Marquise de Surville and her grand-daughter were come to stay for some months at their château.

"They could not have done that in the late Baron's time—the Lord be good unto his soul !" And the old man forthwith commenced the history of some mysterious feud between the two families, in which the deceased Baron Godfred had finally remained victor.

To this tedious narrative of ancient enmities, Adolphe was little inclined to listen. "A name and an estate are all our ancestors have a right to leave behind them. The saints preserve us from a legacy of their foes ! Nothing could be worse,—except their friends."

The next morning the Baron arranged his suit of sables with unusual care, though it must be confessed he always took care enough.

"Pray Heaven the Marquise may be of my way of thinking respecting the quarrels of our forefathers ! Some old ladies have terrible memories," were Adolphe's uppermost ideas as he rode over the draw-bridge at the Château de Surville, which had been promptly lowered to his summons ; — their only neighbour, he had thought it but courteous to offer his personal respects. How much more cheerful did the saloon, with its hangings of sea-green silk, worked in gold, seem than his own hall, encumbered with the dusty trophies of his ancestors. To

be sure, the young Baron was not at that moment a very fair judge ; for the first thing that met him on his entrance was a glance from the same pair of large bright eyes which had been haunting him for the last four and twenty hours.

The grandmother was as stern a looking old gentlewoman as ever had knights in armour for ancestors : still her eyes, also bright, clear, and piercing, somewhat resembled those of her grand-daughter. On the rest of her face time had wrought "strange disfeatures." She was silent ; and, after the first compliments, resumed the volume she had been reading on the Baron's appearance. It was a small book, bound in black velvet, with gold clasps, richly wrought. Adolphe took it for granted it was her Breviary ; and inwardly concluded how respectable is that piety in an old woman which leaves the young one under her charge quite at liberty ! The visitor's whole attention was soon devoted to the oriel window where sat the beautiful Clotilde de Surville. The Baron de Launaye piqued himself on fastidious taste in women and horses : he had had some experience in both. But Clotilde was faultless. There she leant, with the splendour of day full upon her face ; it fell upon her pure complexion like joy upon the heart, and the sunbeams glittered amid the thick ringlets till every curl was edged with gold. Her dress alone seemed capable of improvement ; but it is as well to leave something to the imagination, and there was ample food for Adolphe's, in picturing the change that would be wrought upon Clotilde by a Parisian milliner. "This comes," thought he, "of being brought up in an old German castle."

For very shame he at last rose ; when, with a grim change of countenance, meant for a smile, the Marquise asked him to stay dinner. It is a remark not the less true for being old (though now-a-days opinions are all on the change), that love-making is a thing "to hear, and not to tell." We shall therefore leave the progress of the wooing, and come to the *dénouement*, which was the most proper possible, viz. marriage. Adolphe had been the most devoted of lovers, and Clotilde had given him a great deal of modest encouragement ; that is, her bright eyes had often wandered in search of his, and the moment they had found them, had dropped to the ground ; and whenever he

entered the room, a blush had come into her cheek, like the light into the pearl, filling it with the sweet hues of the rose. Never did love-affair proceed more prosperously. The old seneschal was the only person who grumbled. He begged leave to remind the young Baron, that it was not showing proper respect to his ancestors not to take up their quarrels.

"But things are altered since the days when lances were attached to every legacy," returned Adolphe.

"We are altering every thing now-a-days," replied the old man; "I don't see, however, that we are a bit the better off."

"I, at all events, expect happiness," replied his master, "in this change of my condition."

"Ay, ay, so we all do before we are married: what we find after, there is no use in saying, for two reasons; first, you would not believe me; secondly, my wife might hear what I'm telling."

"Ah!" exclaimed the young Baron, "the caution that marriage teaches! If it were only for the prudence I should acquire, it would be worth my while to marry."

"Alas! rashness never yet wanted a reason. My poor young master! the old Marquise and her dark-eyed grand-daughter have taken you in completely."

"Taken me in!" ejaculated De Launaye angrily; "why, you old fool, were this a mere match of interest, I might thank my stars for such a lucky chance. Young, beautiful, high-born, and rich, Clotilde has but to appear at the court, and insure a much higher alliance than mine. What motive could they have?"

"I do not know; but when I don't know people's motives, I always suppose the worst," replied the obstinate Dominique.

"Charitable," laughed his master.

"And besides," resumed the seneschal, "the old Marquise plagued her husband into the grave; and I dare say her grand-daughter means to do as much for you."

"A novel reason, at all events, for taking a husband," said De Launaye, "in order that you may plague him to death afterwards."

Well, the wedding-day arrived at last. De Launaye could have found some fault with his bride's costume, but for her face.

There was a stiffness in the rigid white satin, and the ruff was at least two inches too high—indeed, he did not see any necessity for the ruff at all; they had been quite out, some years, at Paris. However, he said nothing, remembering that a former hint on the subject of dress had not been so successful as its merits deserved. He had insinuated, and that in a compliment too, a little lowering of the ruff before, as a mere act of justice to the ivory throat, when Clotilde had rejoined, answering in a tone which before marriage was gentle reproof, (a few months after it would have sounded like reproach,) that she hoped “the Baron de Launaye would prefer propriety in his wife to display.” The sense of the speech was forgotten in its sentiment; a very usual occurrence, by-the-by. However, the bride looked most beautiful; her clear, dark eyes swam in light—the liquid brilliancy of happiness—the brightness, but not the sadness, of tears. The ceremony was over, the priest and the Marquise had given their blessings; the latter also added some excellent advice, which was not listened to with all the attention it deserved. The young couple went to their own castle in a new and huge coach, every one of whose six horses wore white and silver favours. Neighbours they had none, but a grand feast was given to the domestics; and Dominique, at his master’s express orders, broached a pipe of Bourdeaux. “I can’t make my vassals,” said De Launaye, “as happy as myself; but I can make them drunk, and that is something towards it.”

The day darkened into night; and here, according to all regular precedents in romance, hero and heroine ought to be left to themselves; but there never yet was a rule without an exception. However, to infringe upon established custom as little as possible, we will enter into no details of how pretty the bride looked in her nightcap, but proceed forthwith to the Baron’s first sleep. He dreamt that the sun suddenly shone into his chamber. Dazzled by the glare, he awoke, and found the bright eyes of his bride gazing tenderly on his face. Weary as he was, still he remembered how uncourteous it would be to lie sleeping while she was so wide awake, and he forthwith roused himself as well as he could. Many persons say they can’t sleep in a strange bed; perhaps this might be the case

with his bride : and in new situations people should have all possible allowance made for them.

They rose early the following morning, the Baroness bright-eyed and blooming as usual, the Baron pale and abattu. They wandered through the castle : De Launaye told of his uncle's prediction.

"How careful I must be of you," said the bride, smiling. "I shall be quite jealous."

Night came, and again Adolphe was wakened from his first sleep by Clotilde's bright eyes. The third night arrived and human nature could bear no more.

"Good God, my dearest !" exclaimed the husband, "do you never sleep ?"

"Sleep !" replied Clotilde, opening her large bright eyes, till they were even twice their usual size and brightness. "Sleep!—one of my noble race, sleep ? I never slept in my life."

"She never sleeps !" ejaculated the Baron, sinking back on his pillow in horror and exhaustion.

It had been settled that the young couple should forthwith visit Paris—thither they at once proceeded. The beauty of the Baroness produced a most marvellous sensation, even in that city of sensations. Nothing was heard of for a week but the enchanting eyes of the Baroness de Launaye—a diamond necklace of a new pattern was invented in her honour, and called *aux beaux yeux de Clotilde*.

"Those eyes," said a prince of the blood, whose taste in such matters had been cultivated by some years of continual practice, "those eyes of Mde. de Launaye will rob many of our young gallants of their rest."

"Very true," briefly replied her husband.

Well, the Baroness shone like a meteor in every scene, while the Baron accompanied her, the spectre of his former self. Sallow, emaciated, every body said he was going into a consumption. Still it was quite delightful to witness the devotedness of his wife—she could scarcely bear him a moment out of her sight.

At length they left Paris, accompanied by a gay party, for their château. But brilliant as were these guests, nothing

distracted the Baroness's attention from her husband, whose declining health became every hour more alarming. One day, however, the young Chevalier de Ronsarde—he, the conqueror of a thousand hearts—the besieger of a thousand more—whose conversation was that happy mixture of flattery and scandal which is the *beau idéal* of dialogue,—engrossed Mde. de Launaye's attention; and her husband took the opportunity of slipping away unobserved. He hastened into a gloomy avenue—the cedars, black with time and age, met like night, overhead, and far and dark did their shadows fall on the still and deep lake beside. Worn, haggard, with a timorous and hurried, yet light step, the young Baron might have been taken for one of his own ancestors, permitted for a brief period to revisit his home on earth, but invested with the ghastliness and the gloom of the grave.

“She never sleeps!” exclaimed the miserable Adolphe—“she never sleeps! day and night her large bright eyes eat like fire into my heart.” He paused, and rested for support against the trunk of one of the old cedars. “Oh, my uncle, why did not your prophecy, when it warned me against danger, tell me distinctly in what the danger consisted? To have a wife who never sleeps! Dark and quiet lake, how I envy the stillness of your depths—the shadows which rest upon your waves!”

At this moment a breath of wind blew a branch aside—a sunbeam fell upon the Baron's face; he took it for the eyes of his wife. Alas! his remedy lay temptingly before him—the still, the profound, the shadowy lake. De Launaye took one plunge—it was into eternity. Two days he was missing—the third his lifeless body floated on the heavy waters. The Baron de Launaye had committed suicide, and the bright-eyed Baroness was left a disconsolate widow.

Such is the tale recorded in the annals of the house of De Launaye. Some believe it entirely, justly observing, there is nothing too extraordinary to happen. Others (for there always will be people who affect to be wiser than their neighbours) say that the story is an ingenious allegory—and that the real secret of the Sleepless Lady was jealousy. Now, if a jealous wife can't drive a man out of his mind and into a lake, we do not know what can!

G. p. 131.

The prompt and benevolent feeling with which Mr. Canning hastened to promote any mission of mercy, may be gathered from the annexed note.

“Quarter past one.

“I have only this instant ascertained that Lord Sidmouth will not be in town till Monday; and that his letters go to him to-night at Weymouth.

“I can give no advice as to the forwarding the papers by express: but I think it right to lose no time in returning them, as you say that the parties are desirous of doing so.

“I remain,

“Your most obedient and faithful Servant,

“GEO. CANNING.

“The other course would be to carry the papers to Mr. Hobhouse, the Under Secretary of the Home Department, *before post time*.

“I ought to mention that I received your packet only on my arrival here, about a quarter of an hour ago.”

I subjoin another note to show what misery is entailed on those who ought to be, and probably are at the time, most dear to them, when men forget the principles of truth, and forsake the path of honesty.

“Queen Street, Sunday morning.

“DEAR SIR,

“I find that it is the opinion of my friends, that any intercourse with my unhappy husband, or with any friend coming immediately from him, is highly prejudicial to my future happiness; I hope you will pardon me declining your visits under my present circumstances, and believe me sensible of your good intentions. I have the pleasure to subscribe myself,

“Yours much obliged,

“B. HAMMON.

“The above I have been obliged to show publicly; may I

entreat you to give the enclosed to my *dear* husband, 'tis perhaps the *last* favour I shall ever request you to perform for your miserable friend; *do not I beseech you betray me* to any one, but destroy this immediately. Anything you wish to *say* or *send*, you may confide to the bearer."

THE MARCH TO MOSCOW.

THERE is often a curious propensity in popular and successful writers to try their luck (if one may use so vulgar a term) with something anonymous ; just as it were, to ascertain the difference of value and applause attached by the public to their name and their production ; to test, if I may say so, the intrinsic merit of their performances. This is sometimes essayed in volumes, or publications of unacknowledged poetry ; and, occasionally, in fugitive effusions, thrown into any channel convenient for the purpose. Such was Southey's hit of the "March to Moscow," which was palmed upon me as the writing of a Mr. Sayer in the Tower ; and, no matter by whom, immediately admitted to the "Sun" as a very clever and original *jeu d'esprit*. Other pieces from the same source afterwards found their way in like manner into the Journal, and I shall have to look into the author's collected works to discover whether or not they have all been reprinted. The "March to Moscow" was, a good many years after its first appearance ; but a copy of it in its earliest form cannot be unacceptable anywhere, and I have pleasure in subjoining it.

THE MARCH TO MOSCOW.

BUONAPARTE he would set out
 For a summer excursion to Moscow ;
 The fields were green, and the sky was blue,—
 Morbieu ! Parbleu !
 What a pleasant excursion to Moscow !
 Four hundred thousand men and more—
 Heigh ho ! for Moscow !

There were marshals by the dozen, and dukes by the score,
 Princes a few, and kings one or two,
 While the fields were so green and the sky so blue—
 Morbleu! Parbleu!
 What a pleasant excursion to Moscow!

There was a Junot and Augereau—
 Heigh ho! for Moscow!
 Dombrowsky and Poniatowsky,
 General Rapp and the Emperor Nap.
 Nothing would do—
 While the fields were so green and the sky so blue—
 Morbleu! Parbleu!
 But they must be marching to Moscow.

But then the Russians they turned to,
 All on the road to Moscow.
 Nap. had to fight his way all thro';
 They could fight, but they could not "parlez vous."
 But the fields were green and the sky was blue—
 Morbleu! Parbleu!
 And so he got to Moscow.

But they made the place too hot for him
 (For they set fire to Moscow);
 To get there had cost him much ado,
 And then no better course he knew,
 While the fields were green and the sky was blue—
 Morbleu! Parbleu!
 Than to march back again from Moscow.

The Russians they stuck close to him,
 A'l on the road from Moscow:
 There was Tormazow and Jemabow,
 And all others that end in *ow*;
 Rajesky and Noverefsky,
 And all the others that end in *efsky*:
 Schamscheff, Souchosaneff, and Schepeleff,
 And all the others that end in *eff*:
 Wasiltchikoff, Kostomaroff, and Tchoglokokoff,
 And all the others that end in *off*:
 Milaračovitch, Jaladovitch, and Karatichkowitch,
 And all the others that end in *itch*:
 Oscharoffsy, and Rostoffsky, and Kazatichkoffsky,
 And all the others that end in *offsky*:
 And last of all an admiral came,
 A terrible man with a terrible name,
 A name which you all must know very well;
 Nobody can speak and nobody can spell:
 And Platoff he play'd them off,
 And Markoff he mark'd them off

And Tutchkoff he touch'd them off,
 And Kutousoff he cut them off,
 And Woronzoff he worried them off,
 And Dochteroff he doctor'd them off,
 And Rodinoff he flogged them off :
 They stuck to them with all their might;
 They were on the left and on the right,
 Behind and before, and by day and by night,
 Nap. would rather "parlez vous" than fight,
 But "parlez vous" no more would do—

Morbleu ! Parbleu !

For they remembered Moscow !

And then came on the frost and snow,
 All on the road from Moscow;
 The Emperor Nap. found as he went
 That he was not quite omnipotent ;
 And worse and worse the weather grew,
 The fields were so white and the sky so blue—
 Sacrebleu ! Ventrebleu !

What a terrible journey from Moscow !

" The Devil take the hindmost,
 All on the road from Moscow !"
 Quoth Nap., who thought it was no delight
 To fight all day and to freeze all night ;
 And so not knowing what else to do,
 When the fields were white and the sky so blue—
 Morbleu ! Parbleu !

He stole away—I tell you true—
 All on the road from Moscow !

'Twas as much too cold upon the road
 As it was too hot at Moscow ;
 But there is a place which he must go to—
 Where the fire is red and the brimstone blue—
 Morbleu ! Parbleu !
 He'll find it hotter than Moscow !

LAMIA.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

APOLLONIUS, *a philosopher, a sophist, tutor to LYCIUS.*

LYCIUS, *a young man of noble birth, pupil to APOLLONIUS.*

MERCUTIUS,	} <i>young wild gallants of Corinth.</i>
CURIO,	
GALLO, and	
others,	

JULIUS, *brother to Lycius.*

DOMUS, (*pro tempore*) *butler to LAMIA.*

PICUS, (ditto) *steward to ditto.*

LAMIA, *an Enchantress, by nature a serpent, but now under the disguise of a beautiful woman.*

The scene is in or near Corinth.

LAMIA ;

A ROMANCE.

A mossy Bank with trees, on the high Road near Corinth.

Enter LAMIA.

LAMIA.

HERE I'll sit down and watch ; till his dear foot
Pronounce him to my ear. That eager hope
Hath won me from the brook before I view'd
My unacquainted self.—But yet it seem'd
A most rare change,—and methinks the change
Has left the old fascination in my eyes.
Look, here's a shadow of the shape I am—
A dainty shadow ! *[She sits down on the bank.]*
How fair the world seems now myself am fair !
These dewy daffodils ! these sweet green trees !
I've coiled about their roots—but now I pluck
Their drooping branches with this perfect hand !
Sure those were Dryades
That with such glancing looks peep'd thro' the green
To gaze upon my beauty. *[LYCIUS enters and passes on without noting her.]*
Lycius ! sweet Lycius !—what, so cruel still !
What have I done thou ne'er wilt deign a look,
But pass me like a worm ?

LYCIUS.

Ha ! who art thou ? *[Looking back.]*

O Goddess, (for there is no mortal tint,

No line about thee lower than divine)
 What may that music mean, thy tuneful tongue
 Hath sent in chase of me ?—I slight ! I scorn thee !
 By all the light of day, till this kind hour
 I never saw that face !—nor one as fair.

LAMIA.

O fie, fie, fie !—what, have you never met
 That face at Corinth ?—turn'd too oft towards you,
 Like the poor maidens that adored Apollo :—
 You must have mark'd it !—

LYCIUS.

Nay, then hear me swear !
 By all Olympus and its starry thrones,—
 My eyes have never chanced so sweet a sight,
 Not in my summer dreams !—

LAMIA.

Enough, enough !—why then I've watched in vain—
 Track'd all your ways, and follow'd like your shadow ;
 Hung you with blessings—haunted you with love—
 And waited on your aspect—all in vain !—
 I might as well have spent my loving looks
 Like Ariadne,—on the sullen sea
 And hoped for a reflection. Youth, farewell.

LYCIUS.

O not yet—not yet farewell !
 Let such an unmatch'd vision still shine on,
 Till I have set an impress in my heart
 To cope with life's decay !

LAMIA.

You say but well.
 I must soon hie me to my elements ;
 But take your pleasure at my looks till then.

LYCIUS.

You are not of this earth, then ?

[*Sadly.*

LAMIA.

Of this earth ?

Why not ? And of this same and pleasant isle.
My world is yours, and I would have no other.
One earth, one sea, one sky, in one horizon,
Our room is wide enough, unless you hate me.

LYCIUS.

Hate you !

LAMIA.

Then you may wish to set the stars between us,
The dim and utter lamps of east and west.
So far you'd have me from you.

LYCIUS.

Cruel Syren !

To set your music to such killing speech.
Look if my eyes turn from you,—if my brows,
Or any hinting feature shows dislike.
Nay, hear my lips—

LAMIA.

If they will promise love
Or talk of it ; but chide, and you will kill me !

LYCIUS.

Then, love, speak forth a promise for thyself,
And all heaven's witnesses be by to hear thee.—

LAMIA.

Hold, hold ! I'm satisfied. You'll love me, then ?

LYCIUS.

With boundless, endless love.

LAMIA.

Aye, give me much on't—for you owe me much,
If you knew all.
I've lick'd the very dust whereon you tread—

LYCIUS.

It is not true !

LAMIA.

I'll swear it if you will. Jove heard the words,
And knows they are sadly true.

LYCIUS.

And this for me !

LAMIA.

Aye, sweet, and more. A poor, fond wretch, I fill'd
The flowers with my tears ; and lay supine
In coverts wild and rank—fens, horrid, desolate !
'Twould shock your very soul if you could see
How this poor figure once was marr'd and vilified,
How grovell'd and debased ; contemn'd and hated
By my own self, because, with all its charms,
It then could hope no favour in your eyes ;
And so I hid it,
With toads and newts, and hideous shiny things,
Under old ruins, in vile solitudes,
Making their haunts my own.

LYCIUS.

'Tis strange and piteous.—Why, then, you madden'd ?

LAMIA.

I was not quite myself—(not what I am)—
Yet something of the woman staid within me,
To weep she was not dead.

LYCIUS.

Is this no fable ?

LAMIA.

O most mistrustful Lycius ! Hear me call
On Heaven, anew, for vouchers to these facts. *[It thunders.]*
There ! Could'st thou question that ? Sweet skies I thank ye !
Now, Lycius, doubt me if you may or can ;
And leave me if you will. I can but turn
The wretched creature that I was, again,
Crush'd by our equal hate. Once more, farewell.

LYCIUS.

Farewell, but not till death. O gentlest, dearest,
 Forgive my doubts. I have but paused till now
 To ask, if so much bliss could be no dream.
 Now I am sure——

Thus I embrace it with my whole glad heart
 For ever and for ever : I could weep.
 Thy tale hath shown me such a matchless love,
 It makes the elder chronicles grow dim.

I always thought

I wander'd all uncared for on my way,
 Betide me good or ill—nor caused more tears
 Than hung upon my sword. Yet I was hung
 With dew, rich pearly dew—shed from such spheres
 As sprinkle them in amber. Thanks, bounteous stars.
 Henceforth you shall but rain your beams upon me
 To bless my brighten'd days.

LAMIA.

O sweet ! sweet ! sweet !

To hear you parley thus and gaze upon you !
 Lycius, dear Lycius !
 But tell me, dearest, will you never—never
 Think lightly of myself, nor scorn a love
 Too frankly set before you ! because 'twas given
 Unask'd, though you should never give again :
 Because it was a gift and not a purchase—
 A boon, and not a debt ; not love for love,
 Where one half's due for gratitude.

LYCIUS.

Thrice gracious seems thy gift !

LAMIA.

Oh, no ! Oh, no !

I should have made you wait, and beg, and kneel,
 And swear as though I could but half believe you ;
 I have not even stay'd to prove your patience
 By crosses and feign'd slights,—giv'n you no time

For any bribing gifts or costly shows.
I know you will despise me.

LYCIUS.

Never, never,
So long as I have sight within these balls,
Which only now I've learn'd to thank the Gods for.

LAMIA.

'Tis prettily sworn ; and frankly I'll believe you !
Now shall we on our way ? I have a house
(Till now no home) within the walls of Corinth :
Will you not master it as well as me ?

LYCIUS.

My home is in your heart ; but where you dwell,
There is my dwelling-place. But let me bear you, sweet !

LAMIA.

No, I can walk, if you will charm the way
With such discourse ; it makes my heart so light,
I seem to have wings within ; or, if I tire,
I'll lean upon you thus.

LYCIUS.

So lean for ever !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Market-place at Corinth.

APOLLONIUS is discovered discoursing with various young Gallants,
namely, MERCUTIUS, CURIO, &c.

APOLLONIUS.

Hush Sirs !—

You raise a tingling blush about my ears,
That drink such ribaldry and wanton jests,—
For shame !—for shame !—
You misapply good gifts the gods have granted !

MERCURIUS.

The gods have made us tongues,—brains too, I hope—
And time will bring us beards. You sages think
Minerva's owl dwells only in such bushes.

CURIO.

Ha! ha!—Why we'll have wigs upon our chins—
Long grizzled ones—and snarl about the streets,
Hugged up in pride and spleen like any mantle,
And be philosophers!

APOLLONIUS.

You will do wisely.

CURIO.

Ay,—I hope—why not?
Though age has heap'd no winter on our pates.
Is wisdom such a frail and spoiling thing
It must be packed in ice?

GALLO.

Or sopp'd in vinegar?

APOLLONIUS.

We would you were more grey—

MERCURIUS.

Why would you have us grey before our time?
Oh, Life's poor capital is too soon spent
Without discounting it. Pray do not grudge us
Our share;—a little wine,—a little love,—
A little youth!—a little, little folly,
Since wisdom has the gross. When they are past
We'll preach with you, and call 'em vanities.

APOLLONIUS.

No!—leave that to your mummies. Sure your act
Will purchase you an enbalming. Let me see!—
Here's one hath spent his fortune on a harlot,
And,—if he kept to one it was a merit!—
The next has rid the world of so much wine,—
Why that's a benefit. And you Sir Plume,

Have turn'd your Tailor to a Senator ;—
 You've made no man the worse—(for manner's sake ;
 My speech exempts yourself). You've all done well,
 If not,—your dying shall be placed to your credit.

CURIO.

You show us bravely—could you ever praise one ?

APOLLONIUS.

One ? and no more ! why then I answer, yes,—
 Or rather, no ; for I could never praise him.
 He's as beyond my praise, as your complexion,—
 I wish you'd take a pattern !—

CURIO.

Of whose back, sir ?

APOLLONIUS.

Aye there you must begin and try to match
 The very shadow of his virtuous worth,
 Before you're half a man.

MERCUTIUS.

Who is this model ?

An ape—an Afric ape—what he and Plato
 Conspire to call a Man.

APOLLONIUS.

Then you're a man already ; but no model,
 So I must set my own example up ;
 To show you Virtue, Temperance, and Wisdom,
 And in a youth too !—
 Not in a wither'd greybeard like myself,
 In whom some virtues are mere worn-out vices,
 And wisdom but a due and tardy fruit.
 He, like the orange, bears both fruit and flower
 Upon his odorous bough—the fair and ripe !—

CURIO.

Why you can praise too !

APOLLONIUS.

As well as I dispraise :—They're both in one .

Since you're disparaged when I talk of graces.
 For example, when I say that he I spoke of
 Is no wild sin-monger—no sot—no dicer,
 No blasphemmer o' th' gods—no shameless scoffer,
 No ape—no braggart—no foul libertine—
 Oh no—
 He hugs no witching wanton to his heart,
 He keeps no vices he's obliged to muffle ;—
 But pays a filial honour to grey hairs,
 And guides him by that voice, Divine Philosophy.

GALLO.

Well, he's a miracle!—and what's he called ?

(ALL.)

Aye, who is he ?—who is he ?

APOLLONIUS.

His name is Lycius.

CURIO.

Then he's coming yonder :—
 Lord, how these island fogs delude our eyes,
 I could have sworn to a girl too with him.

APOLLONIUS.

Aye, aye,—you know these eyes can shoot so far,
 Or else the jest were but a sorry one.

CURIO.

Mercutius sees her too.

MERCUTIUS.

In faith I do, sir,—

APOLLONIUS.

Peace puppies—nine days hence you will see truer.

CURIO.

Nay, but by all the gods !—

GALLO.

We'll take our oath on't.

s 2

APOLLONIUS.

Peace, peace! (*aside*) I see her too—This is some mockery,
Illusion, damn'd illusion!—

What, ho! Lycius!

[LYCIUS (*entering*) wishes to pass aside. LAMIA clings close to him

LAMIA.

Hark!—who is that?—quick fold me in your mantle,
Don't let him see my face!—

LYCIUS.

Nay fear not, sweet—
'Tis but old Apollonius—my sage guide.

LAMIA.

Don't speak to him—don't stay him—let him pass!—
I have a terror of those greybeard men—
They frown on Love with such cold churlish brows
That sometimes he hath flown!—

LYCIUS.

Aye, he will chide me—
But do not you fear aught. Why how you tremble!

LAMIA.

Pray shroud me closer. I am cold—death cold!—
[Old APOLLONIUS comes up, followed by the Gallants.

APOLLONIUS.

My son what have you here?

LYCIUS.

A foolish bird that flew into my bosom:—
You would not drive him hence?

APOLLONIUS.

Well, let me see it,
I have some trifling skill in augury,
And can divine you from its beak and eyes
What sort of fowl it is.—

LYCIUS.

I have learn'd that, sir—
'Tis what is called—a dove—sacred to Venus:—

[The Youths laugh and pluck APOLLONIUS by the sleeve.

Fool ! drive it out ! [To LYCIUS.

LYCIUS.

No, not amongst these hawks here.

APOLLONIUS.

Let 's see it then.

(ALL.)

Aye, aye, old Greybeard, you say well for once,
Let 's see it :—let 's see it !—

APOLLONIUS.

Art sure it is no snake,—to suit the fable,
You 've nestled in your bosom ?—

LAMIA (*under the mantle*).

Lost ! lost ! lost !—

MERCUTIUS.

Hark ! the dove speaks—I knew it was a parrot !—

APOLLONIUS.

Dear Lycius,—my own son (at least till now)
Let me forewarn you, boy !—

LYCIUS.

No, peace, I will not.

CURIO.

There spoke a model for you.

APOLLONIUS.

O Lycius, Lycius—

My eyes are shock'd, and half my age is kill'd
To see your noble self so ill accompanied !—

LYCIUS.

And, sir, my eyes are shock'd too—Fie ! is this
A proper retinue—for those grey hairs ?
A troop of scoffing boys !—Sirs, by your leave
I must and will pass on.

[To the Gallants.

MERCUTIUS.

That as you can, sir—

LYCIUS.

Why then this arm has cleared a dozen such.

[They scuffle; in the tumult APOLLONIUS is overturned.]

APOLLONIUS.

Unhappy boy!—this overthrow's your own!—

[LYCIUS frees himself and LAMIA, and calls back.]

LYCIUS.

Lift—help him—pick him up—fools—braggarts—apes,—

Step after me who dares!—

[Exit with LAMIA.]

GALLO.

Whew!—here's a model—

How fare you, sir, *(to APOLLONIUS)*—your head?—I fear

Your wisdom has suffer'd by this fall.

APOLLONIUS.

My heart aches more:—

O Lycius! Lycius!—

CURIO.

Hark! he calls his model!—

'Twas a brave pattern.—We shall never match him.

Such wisdom and such virtues—in a youth too,

He keeps no muffled vices.—

MERCUTIUS.

No! no! not he!—

Nor hugs no naughty wantons in his arms—

CURIO.

But pays a filial honour to grey hairs,

And listens to thy voice—Divine Philosophy!

[They run off, laughing and mocking.]

APOLLONIUS.

You have my leave to jest. The Gods unravel

This hellish witchery that hides my scholar!

O Lycius! Lycius!

[Exit APOLLONIUS.]

SCENE III.

A rich Chamber, with Pictures and Statues.

Enter DOMUS unsteadily, with a flask in his hand.

DOMUS.

Here's a brave palace !

[*Looking round.*]

Why, when this was spread
Gold was as cheap as sunshine. How it's stuck
All round about the walls. Your health, brave palace !
Ha ! Brother Picus. Look ! are you engaged too ?

(*Enter PICUS.*)

Hand us your hand : you see I'm butler here.
How came you hither ?

PICUS.

How ? Why a strange odd man—
A sort of foreign slave, I think—address'd me
I' the market, waiting for my turn,
Like a beast of burthen, and hired me for this service.

DOMUS.

So I was hired, too.

PICUS.

'Tis a glorious house !
But come, let's kiss the lips of your bottle.

DOMUS.

Aye, but be modest : wine is apt to blush.

PICUS.

'Tis famous beverage :
It makes me reel i' the head.

DOMUS.

I believe ye, boy.
Why, since I sipped it—(mind, I'd only sipped)—
I've had such glorious pictures in my brains—

Such rich rare dreams !
 Such blooms, and rosy bowers, and tumbling fountains,
 With a score of moons shining at once upon me,—
 I never saw such sparkling !

[Drinks.]

PICUS.

Here's a vision !

DOMUS.

The sky was always bright ; or, if it gloom'd,
 The very storms came on with scented waters,
 And, if it snow'd, 'twas roses ; claps of thunder
 Seemed music, only louder ; nay, in the end,
 Died off in gentle ditties. Then, such birds !
 And gold and silver chafers bobb'd about ;
 And when there came a little gush of wind,
 The very flowers took wing and chased the butterflies !

PICUS.

Egad, 'tis very sweet. I prithee, dearest Domus,
 Let me have one small sup !

DOMUS.

No ! hear me out.

The hills seemed made of cloud, bridges of rainbows,
 The earth like trodden smoke.
 Nothing at all was heavy, gross, or human :
 Mountains, with climbing cities on their backs,
 Shifted about like castled elephants ;
 You might have launch'd the houses on the sea,
 And seen them swim like galleys !
 The stones I pitch'd i' the ponds would barely sink—
 I could have lifted them by tons !

[Drinks.]

PICUS.

Dear Domus, let me paint too—dear, dear, Domus.

DOMUS.

Methought I was all air—Jove ! I was fear'd,
 I had not flesh enough to hold me down
 From mounting up to the moon.

At every step—
Bounce ! when I only thought to stride a pace,
I bounded thirty.

PICUS.

Thirty ! Oh, let me drink !

DOMUS.

And that too when I'd even eat or drank
At the rate of two meals to the hour ! [Drinks.

PICUS.

Two meals to the hour—nay Domus—let me drink,
Dear Domus let me drink—before 'tis empty !—

DOMUS.

But then my fare was all so light and delicate,
The fruits, the cakes, the meats so dainty frail,
They would not bear a bite—no, not a munch,
But melted away like ice. Come, here's the bottle !

PICUS.

Thanks, Domus—Pshaw, it's empty !—Well, who cares—
There's something thin and washy after all
In these poor visions. They all end in emptiness,
Like this. [Turns down the bottle.

DOMUS.

Then fill again, boy—fill again !
And be ——. I say, look there !—

PICUS.

It is our Lady !

[LAMIA enters leaning upon LYCIUS.

DOMUS.

Our Lady's very welcome : (*bowing*) yours, my lady—
Sir, your poor butler : (*to LYCIUS*) Picus,—man,—speak up,
The very same that swam so in my dreams ;
I had forgot the Goddess !—

LAMIA.

Peace, rude knave !
You've tasted what belonged to nobler brains,

And maddened!—My sweet love (*to Lycius*) 'twas kept for you,
'Tis nature's choicest vintage.

(*to Domus*) Drink no more, sir!
Except what I'll provide you.

DOMUS.

O sweet Lady!
Lord, and I had a cup I'd thank you in it!—
But you've been drunk,—sweet lady—you've been drunk!
Here's Master Picus knows—for we drunk you.—

PICUS.

Not I, in faith.

LYCIUS.

Ha! ha! my gentle love,
Methinks your butler should have been your steward.

DOMUS.

Why you are merry, Sir—
And well you may. Look here's a house we've come to!
O Jupiter!
Look here are pictures, Sir, and here's our statues!—
That's Bacchus! [*Pointing.*]
And there's Apollo,—just aiming at the serpent.

LAMIA.

Peace, fool—my dearest Lycius,
Pray send him forth.

LYCIUS.

Sirrah, take him off! [*To Steward.*]

PICUS.

Fie, Domus—know your place.

DOMUS.

My place, slave!
What, don't I know my place? [*Falls on his back.*]
Ain't I the butler?

LYCIUS.

No more—no more—there—pull him out by the heels—
[*Domus is dragged out.*]

(To LAMIA.) My most dear love—how fares it with you now ?
Your cheek is somewhat pale.

LAMIA.

Indeed, I'm weary,
We'll not stay here—I have some cheer provided
In a more quiet chamber.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

A Street in Corinth ; on one side a very noble building, which is the residence of LAMIA. MERCUTIUS, with the other Gallants, come and discourse in front of the house.

MERCUTIUS.

So, here they're lodged !

In faith a pretty nest !

GALLO.

The first that led us hither for revenge—
O brave Mercutius !

CURIO.

Now my humour's different,
For whilst there's any stone left in the market-place
That hurt these bones, when that pert chick o'erset us
I'd never let him sleep !—

GALLO.

Nor I, by Nemesis !
I'd pine him to a ghost for want of rest.
To the utter verge of death.

MERCUTIUS.

And then you'd beat him.
Is that your noble mind ?

GALLO.

Lo ! here's a turncoat !
D'ye hear him, gentles ?—he's come here to fool us !

MERCUTIUS.

Nor I ; but that I'm turned, I will confess it ;—
 For as we came—in thinking over this—
 Of Lycius, and the lady whom I glanced
 Crouching within his mantle—
 Her most distressful look came so across me—
 Her death-white cheeks—
 That I for one, can find no heart to fret her.

CURIO.

Shall Lycius then go free ?

MERCUTIUS.

Aye for her sake :—
 But do your pleasure ;—it is none of mine.

GALLO.

Why, a false traitor !—

[Exit

CURIO.

Sirs, I can expound him ;
 He's smit—he's passion-smit—I heard him talk
 Of her strange witching eyes—such rare ones,
 That they turn'd him cold as stone.

GALLO.

Why let him go then—but we'll to our own.

CURIO.

Aye let's be plotting
 How we can vent our spites on this Sir Lycius—
 I own it stirs my spleen, more than my bruises
 To see him fare so well—hang him !—a model !—
 One that was perk'd too, underneath our noses,
 For virtue and for temperance.
 I have a scheme will grieve 'em without end :
 I plann'd it by the way.
 You know this fellow, Lycius, has a father
 Some fifteen leagues away. We'll send him thither
 By some most urgent message.

GALLO.

Bravely plotted :

His father shall be dying. Ah ! 'tis excellent.

I long to attempt the lady ;—nay, we'll set

Mercutius, too, upon her ! Pray let's to it.

Look ! here's old Ban-dog.

[APOLLONIUS appears in the distance.]

CURIO.

Nay, but I will act

Some mischief ere I go.—There's for thee, Lycius !

*[He casts a stone through the window and they run off.]**Enter APOLLONIUS.*

APOLLONIUS.

Go to, ye silly fools !—Lo ! here's a palace !

I have grown grey in Corinth, but my eyes

Never remember it. Who is the master ?

Some one is coming forth. Lycius again !

[LYCIUS comes out disordered, with his face flushed, and reels up to APOLLONIUS.]

LYCIUS.

Why, how now, Greybeard ? What ! are these your frolics,

To sound such rude alarm in our ears ?

Go to !

APOLLONIUS.

Son, do you know me ?

LYCIUS.

Know you ? Why ?

Or how ? You have no likeness in our skies !

Grey hairs and such sour looks ! You'd be a wonder !

We've nothing but bright faces. Hebes, Venuses,—

No age, no frowns !

No wrinkle, but our laughter shakes in wine.

I wish you'd learn to drink.

APOLLONIUS.

O Lycius ! Lycius !

Would you had never learn'd to drink, except those springs

We supp'd together! These are mortal draughts,—
Your cup is drugg'd with death!

LYCIUS.

Grave sir, you lie!

I'm a young God. Look! do you not behold
The new wings on my shoulders? You may die—
That moss upon your chin proclaims you're mortal—
And feel decays of age. But I'm renewable
At every draught I take! Here, Domus! Domus!

Enter DOMUS.

Bring a full cup of nectar for this churl. [Exit DOMUS.]
'Twill give you back your youth, sir,—aye, like magic,—
And lift you o'er the clouds. You'll dream of nothing
That's meaner than Olympus. Smiling Goddesses
Will haunt you in your sleep. You'll walk on flowers,
And never crush their heads.

Enter DOMUS with wine.

APOLLONIUS.

Peace, madman, peace!

None of your draughts for me—your magic potions,
That stuff your brains with such pernicious cheats!
I say, bear off the bowl! [To DOMUS.]

LYCIUS.

What!—will he not?—

Then cast it over him,—'twill do us well—
He shall be a demi-god against his will.
Cast it I say!— [To DOMUS.]

DOMUS.

'Tis such a sinful waste!

Why, there then,—there [He throws it over APOLLONIUS.]
Look how it falls to the ground!—
Lord you might soak him in it year by year,
And never plump him up to a comely youth
Like you or me, sir!—

LYCIUS.

Let him go. Farewell !—
Look, foolish Greybeard,—I am going back
To what your wisdom scorn'd.—A minute hence
My soul is in Elysium !—

[*Exit with DOMUS.*]

APOLLONIUS.

Fool,—Farewell,—
Why, I was sprinkled,—yet I feel no wet,—
'Tis strange !—this is some magic, against which
Philosophy is proof.—I must untangle it.
Hold !—

[*He stands in meditation.*]

I have it faintly dawning in my brain.
'Tis somewhere in my books (which I'll refer to)—
Speaking of Nature's monstrous prodigies,
That there be witching snakes—Circean births—
Who by foul spells, and forgeries, can take
The mask and shape of woman—fair externe,
But viperous within.—And so they creep
Into young hearts,—and falsify the brain
With juggling mockeries. Alas, poor boy—
If this should be thy case !—These are sad tales
To send unto thy father.

[*MERCUTIUS enters without perceiving APOLLONIUS: going up to
LAMIA'S house he recollects himself.*]

MERCUTIUS.

Here again !
What folly led me hither ?—I thought I was
Proceeding homeward.—Why I've walked a circle
And end where I began !—

[*APOLLONIUS goes up and calls in his ear.*]

APOLLONIUS.

I'll tell you, dreamer,
It's magic, it's vile magic brought you hither
And made you walk in a fog.—
There, think of that,—be wise, and save yourself !
I've better men to care for !

[*Exit APOLLONIUS.*]

MERCUTIUS.

What did he say ?

The words were drown'd in my ear by something sweeter.

[*A strain of wild music within the house.*]

Music ! rare music !—It must be her voice ;

I ne'er heard one so thrilling !—Is it safe

To listen to a song so syren-sweet—so exquisite ?—

That I might hold my breath entranced and die

Of ardent listening ?—she is a miracle !

Enter DOMUS.

Look, here 's a sot will tell me all he knows.

One of her servants—

Is that your lady's voice ? (*to Domus*) her pipe's a rare one.

DOMUS.

Ay, marry. If you heard it sound within

Till it makes the glasses chime, and all the bottles,

You'd think yourself in heaven.

MERCUTIUS.

I wish she'd sing again !

DOMUS.

And if you saw her eyes, how you would marvel !

I have seen my master watch them and fall back

Like a madman in his fits. I'm rather dizzy,

And drunken-like myself—The vile quandaries,

Her beauty brings one into—

[*Staggers about.*]

Ay, I'm crazed. But you should see our Picus,—

Lord, how he stands agape, 'till he drops his salver,

And then goes down on his knees.

MERCUTIUS.

And so should I,

Had I been born to serve her !

[*Sighs.*]

DOMUS.

Why you shall, boy ;

And have a leather jerkin—marry, shall you ?

We need a helper sadly. I'm o'er-burthen'd ;
 (You see how I am burthen'd) but I'll teach you
 What manners you may want.

MERCUTIUS.

Well, I'm for you—
 (I will dislike no place that brings me near her)
 Mind you have listed me—

DOMUS.

And I can promise
 You'll not dislike your fare—'tis excellent, light
 As well as savoury, and will not stuff you ;
 But when you've eat your stretch to the outer button,
 In half an hour you'll hunger. It is all feasting,
 With barely a tythe of fasting.—Then such drinking !
 There's such a cellar !
 One hundred paces long, (for I have paced it)
 By about two hundred narrow—Come along boy.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

*A Chamber in LAMIA'S House. LAMIA and LYCIUS are
 discovered sitting on a couch.*

LAMIA.

Nay, sweet-lipp'd Silence,
 'Tis now your turn to talk. I'll not be cheated
 Of any of my pleasures,—which I shall be,
 Unless I sometimes listen.

LYCIUS.

Pray talk on,
 A little further on. You have not told me
 What country bore you, that my heart may set
 Its name in a partial place.—Nay, your own name—
 Which ought to be my better word for beauty—
 I know not.

LAMIA.

Wherefore should I talk of such things
 I care not to remember ? A lover's memory
 Looks back no further than when love began,
 As if the dawn o' the world.
 As for my birth—suppose I like to think
 That we were dropped from two strange several stars
 (Being thus meant for one), why should you wish
 A prettier theory, or ask my name,
 As if I did not answer, heart and eyes,
 To those you call me by ? In sooth I will not
 Provide you with a worse.

LYCIUS.

Then I must find it. Now I'm but puzzled
 To compound sweet superlatives enough
 In all the world of words. [DOMUS enters boisterously with a letter.

DOMUS.

An express ! an express !
 Faith, I've express'd it.—I did not even wait (*aside*)
 To pry between the folds.

[LYCIUS takes the letter and reads in great agitation. LAMIA watches him.

LAMIA.

Alas ! what news is this ? Lycius ! dear Lycius !
 Why do you clutch your brow so ? What has chanced
 To stab you with such grief ? Speak ! speak !

LYCIUS.

My father !

LAMIA.

Dead ?

LYCIUS.

Dying—dying—if not dead by this.
 I must leave you instantly.

LAMIA.

Alas ! I thought
 This fair-eyed day would never see you from me !
 But must you go, indeed ?

LYCIUS.

I must ! I must !

This is some fierce and fearful malady
 To fall so sudden on him. Why, I left him,
 No longer since—ay, even when I met you
 We had embraced that morn.

LAMIA.

It was but yesterday !
 How soon our bliss is marr'd ! And must you leave me ?

LYCIUS.

Oh ! do not ask again with such a look,
 Or I shall linger here and pledge my soul,
 To everlasting shame and keen remorse !

LAMIA.

The Fates are cruel !
 Yet let me cling to thee and weep awhile :
 We may not meet again. I cannot feel
 You are safe but in these arms. *[She embraces him.]*

LYCIUS.

I'm split asunder
 By opposite factions of remorse and love,
 But all my soul clings here.

DOMUS.

It makes me weep.
 He will not see his father. *[LYCIUS casts himself on the couch.]*

LAMIA (*striking DOMUS*).

Wretch ! take that,
 For harrowing up his griefs ! Dearest !—my Lycius !
 Lean not your brow upon that heartless pillow !

DOMUS.

How he groan'd then !

LAMIA.

Lycius, you fright me !
 You turn me cold !

LYCIUS (*rising up*).

Oh, in that brief rest,
I've had a waking vision of my father !
Ev'n as he lay on his face and groan'd for me,
And shed like bitter tears !
Oh, how those groans will count in heav'n against me,—
One for pain's cruelty, but two for mine,
That gave a sting to his anguish.
His dying breath will mount to the skies and curse me.
His anger'd ghost
Will haunt my sight, and when I'd look upon you
Step in like a blot between us.

LAMIA.

Go, go, or you will hate me. Go and leave me !
If I now strive by words or tears to stay you
For my pleasure's sake or pains',
You'd say there was something brutal in my nature
Of cold and fiendish, and unlike woman ;
Some taint that devilish——
Yet give me one long look before you go—
One last, long look ! *[She fixes her eyes on his.]*

LYCIUS.

O Gods, my spirit fails me,
And I have no strength to go although I would.

LAMIA.

Perhaps he is dead already !

LYCIUS.

Ha ! Why, then,
What can I ? Or, if not, what can I still ?
Can I keep him from his urn ? or give him breath ?
Or replenish him with blood ?

LAMIA.

Alas ! alas !
Would I had art or skill enough to heal him !

LYCIUS.

Ay, art and skill, indeed, do more than love
 In such extremities. Stay! here, hard by,
 There dwells a learn'd and most renown'd physician.
 Hath wrought mere miracles.
 Him I'll engage, arm'd with our vows and prayers,
 To spend his utmost study on my father,
 And promptly visit him. A short farewell. [*Exit. DOMUS follows.*]

LAMIA.

Farewell—be not o'er long. It made me tremble
 That he should see his father! The oldest eyes
 Look through some fogs that young ones cannot fathom,
 And lay bare mysteries. Ah me! how frail
 Are my foundations! Dreams, mere summer dreams,
 Which, if a day-beam pierce, return to nothing!
 And let in sadder shows. A foot! so soon!
 Why, then, my wishes hold.

Enter DOMUS and PICUS.

DOMUS.

He's gone! he's gone!
 He had not snuff'd the air, outside o' the gate,
 When it blew a change in his mind. He bade me tell you,
 A voice from the sky-roof, where the gods look down,
 Commanded him to his father.

LAMIA.

No more! no more!
 (The skies begin, then, to dispute my charms.)
 But did he ne'er turn back?

DOMUS.

Ay, more than twice
 He turn'd on his heel, and stood—then turn'd again
 And tramp'd still quicker as he got from hence,
 Till at last he ran like a lapwing!

LAMIA.

This is a tale
 Coin'd by the silly drunkard. You, sir, speak. [*To PICUS.*]

PICUS.

Nay, by our troths——

LAMIA.

Then, Sirrah, do not speak.

If such vile sense be truth, I've had too much on't.

Hence! fly! or I will kill you with a frown.

You've madden'd me!

PICUS.

I saw her eyes strike fire!

[PICUS and DOMUS run out. LAMIA looks round the chamber.

LAMIA.

Alone! alone?

Then, Lamia, weep, and mend your shatter-web,

And hang your tears, like morning dew, upon it.

Look how your honey-bee has broken loose

Through all his meshes, and now wings away,

Showing the toils were frail. Ay, frail as gossamers

That stretch from rose to rose. Some adverse pow'r

Confronts me, or he could not tear them thus.

Some evil eye has pierced my mystery!

A blight is in its ken!

I feel my charms decay—my will's revoked—

And my keen sight, once a prophetic sense,

Is blinded with a cloud—horrid and black,

Like a veil before the face of Misery!

Another Apartment in LAMIA'S House. Enter JULIUS (LYCIUS'S brother) with DOMUS.

JULIUS.

Rumour has not belied the house i' the least,—

'Tis all magnificent. I pray you, sir,

How long has your master been gone?

DOMUS.

About two quarts, sir,

That is, as long as one would be a drinking 'em.

'Tis a very little while since he set off, sir.

JULIUS.

You keep a strange reckoning.
Where is your mistress? Will she see me?

DOMUS.

Ay, marry;

That is, if you meet; for it is good broad daylight.

JULIUS.

This fellow's manners speak but ill for the house. (*Aside.*)
Go, Sirrah, to your lady, with my message:
Tell her, one Julius, Lycius's best friend,
Desires a little converse.

[*Exit DOMUS.*]

Now for this miracle whose charms have bent
The straightest stem of youth strangely awry—
My brother Lycius!
He was not use to let his inclination
Thus domineer his reason: the cool, grave shade
Of Wisdom's porch dwelt ever on his brow
And govern'd all his thoughts, keeping his passions
Severely chasten'd. Lo! she comes. How wondrously
Her feet glide o'er the ground. Aye, she is beautiful!
So beautiful, my task looks stern beside her,
And duty faints like doubt.

[*LAMIA enters.*]

Oh, thou sweet fraud!

Thou fair excuse for sin, whose matchless cheek
Vies blushes with the shame it brings upon thee.
Thou delicate forgery of love and virtue,
Why art thou as thou art, not what here seems
So exquisitely promised?

LAMIA.

Sir, do you know me?

If not,—and my near eyes declare you strange,—
Mere charity should make you think me better.

JULIUS.

Oh, would my wishful thought could think no worse
Than I might learn by gazing.
Why are not those sweet looks—those heavenly looks,

True laws to judge thee by, and call thee perfect ?
'Tis pity, indeed 'tis pity,
That anything so fair should be a fraud !

LAMIA.

Sir, I beseech you, wherefore do you hang
These elegies on me ? For pity's sake
What do you take me for ? No woman, sure,
By aiming thus to wound me (*weeping*).

JULIUS.

Ay, call those tears
Into your ready eyes ! I'd have them scald
Your cheeks until they fade, and wear your beauty
To a safe and ugly ruin. Those fatal charms
Can show no sadder wreck than they have brought
On many a noble soul, and noble mind !
Pray count me :
How many men's havocks might forerun the fall
Of my lost brother Lycius ?

LAMIA.

Are you his brother ?
Then I'll not say a word to vex you : not a look
Shall aim at your offence. You are come to chide me,
I know, for winning him to sell his heart
At such a worthless rate. Yet I will hear you,
Patiently, thankfully, for his dear sake.
I will be as mild and humble as a worm
Beneath your just rebuke. 'Tis sure no woman
Deserved him ; but myself the least of all,
Who fall so far short in his value.

JULIUS.

She touches me ! (*Aside.*)

LAMIA.

Look, sir, upon my eyes. Are they not red ?
Within an hour, I've rained a flood of tears,
To feel, to know

I am no better than the thing I am,
 Having but just now learn'd to rate my vileness.
 You cannot charge
 My unworthy part so bitterly as I do.
 If there's about me anything that's honest,
 Of true and womanly, it belongs to Lycius,
 And all the rest is Grief's.

JULIUS.

Then I'll not grieve you—
 I came with frowns, but I depart in tears
 And sorrow for you both ; for what he was,
 And what you might have been.—A pair of wonders,
 The grace and pride of nature—now disgraced,
 And fallen beyond redress.

LAMIA.

You wring my heart !—

JULIUS.

Ay, if you think how you have made him stain
 The fair-blown pride of his unblemish'd youth,
 His studious years—
 And for what poor exchange ? these fading charms—
 I will not say how frail.

LAMIA.

O hold—pray hold !

Your words have subtle cruel stings, and pierce
 More deeply than you aim ?—This sad heart knows
 How little of such wrong and spiteful ill
 Were in love's contemplation when it clasp'd him !
 Lycius and bliss made up my only thought ;
 But now, alas !
 A sudden truth dawns on me, like a light
 Thro' the remainder tatters of a dream,
 And shows my bliss in shreds.

JULIUS.

I pity you !

Nay, doubtless you will be, some wretched day,
 A perish'd cast-off weed when found no flower—

Or else even then, his substance being gone,
My brother's heart will break at your desertion.

LAMIA.

O never, never !
Never, by holy truth ! whilst I am woman !
Be false what may, at least my heart is honest.
Look round you, sir ; this wealth, such as it is,
Once mine, is now all his ; and when 'tis spent,
I'll beg for him, toil for him, steal for him !
God knows how gladly I would share his lot
This speaking moment in a humble shed
Like any of our peasants !—aye, lay these hands
To rude and rugged tasks, expose these cheeks
You are pleased to flatter, to the ardent sun ;
So we might only live in safe pure love
And constant partnership—never to change
In each other's hearts and eyes !—

[*Fervently.*]

JULIUS.

You mend your fault.

This late fragmental virtue, much redeems you ;
Pray cherish it, Hark ! what a lawless riot.

[*A loud boisterous shout is heard from below.*]

O hope—Again ! (*the noise renewed*) why then this is a triumph
Of your true fame, which I had just mistaken ;
Shame on thee, smooth dissembler—shame upon thee !
Is this the music of your songs of sorrow,
And well-feigned penitence—lo ! here, are these
Your decent retinue——

Enter the wild Gallants, flushed with wine.

LAMIA.

Sir, by heaven's verity

I do not know a face ! *indeed I do not* ;
They are strange to me as the future.

CURIO.

Then the future

Must serve us better, chuck. Here bully mates,
These, Lady, are my friends, and friends of Lycius !

JULIUS.

Is it so ?—then Lycius is fallen indeed !—

CURIO.

Ay, he has had his trip,—as who has not, sir ?
I'll warrant you've had your stumbles,—

JULIUS.

Once,—on an ape.

Get out o' the way of my shins.

[*Going.*]

LAMIA.

Sir, dearest sir,

In pity do not go, for your brother's sake,
If not for mine,—take up my guardianship,
'Gainst these ungentle men.

[*She lays hold of JULIUS.*]

JULIUS.

Off, wanton, off !—

Would you have me of your crew too ?

[*Exit roughly.*]

GALLO.

Let him go !—

He has a graft in him of that sour crab,
The Apollonius—Let him go, a churl !

CURIO.

Sweet lady, you look sad,—fie, it was ill done of Lycius,
To leave his dove so soon,—but he has some swan
At nest in another place.

GALLO.

I'll bet my mare on't.

LAMIA.

Kind Sirs,—indeed I'm sorry
Your friend's not here. If he were by,
He would help you to your welcome.

CURIO.

We've no doubt on't; [*Bitterly.*]

But we'll not grieve, since here we are quite enough
For any merriment.

GALLO.

And as for a welcome,
We'll acknowledge it on your cheer,—

LAMIA.

Then that's but sorry, sir,
If you mean what lies in my heart.

GALLO.

No, no, in faith,
We mean what lies in your cellar,—wine, rare wine,
We will pledge you in floods on't, and when knock'd off our legs,
Adore you on our knees.

LAMIA.

Hear me, sweet gentles,
How you shall win my favour. Set to work and copy—
Be each a Lycius.

GALLO.

Lycius, forsooth ! hang him !
A model again ! the perfect model.

CURIO.

As if we could not match his vices !
Pray ask your Lycius, when he's new come back,
(If ever he come back)
What his father ail'd,—or if he ail'd at all,
And how it ail'd too, that his brother Julius
Got no such forged advice.

GALLO.

It had charm'd your heart to see how swift he ran,
(Whether to get from hence or gain elsewhere,
I know not) but I never saw such striving,
Save at the Olympic games to win the goal.

(ALL.)

Ha ! ha ! ha !

LAMIA.

Laugh on, I pray laugh on. Ye puny spites !
You think to fret me with these ill coin'd tales ;

But look, I join in your glee, [*She attempts to laugh.*
 Or if I cannot, 'tis because I'm choked with a curse.

[*She hurries out.*

GALLO.

It works ! it wings her ! What shall we next ?
 Follow her, or carry her off.

CURIO.

These are too violent,
 And perilous to ourselves ; but I will fit
 Our revenge to its other half. Sir Lycius now
 Must have the green eye set in his head, and then
 They 'll worry each other's hearts without our help.
 Julius or Apollonius will be our ready organs
 To draw his ear.

GALLO.

'Tis plausible, and cannot fail to part 'em,
 And when he has shaken her from off his bough
 It needs she must fall to us.

CURIO.

I wonder where
 That poor sick fool Mercurius is gone ?
 He hath a chance now.

GALLO.

Methought I glanced him
 Below, and forsooth, disguised as a serving-man ;
 But he avoided me.

CURIO.

The subtle fox !
 Let us go beat him up. [*Exeunt hallooing.*

SCENE VI.

The Street before LAMIA'S House. Enter APOLLONIUS with JULIUS.

APOLLONIUS.

I say she is a snake—

JULIUS.

And so say I ;

APOLLONIUS.

But not in the same sense—

JULIUS.

No, not exactly.

You take that literal, which I interpret
But as a parable—a figure feign'd
By the elder sages, (much inclined to mark
Their subtle meanings in dark allegories)
For those poisonous natures—those bewitching sins
That arm'd and guarded with a woman's husk,
But viperous within, seduce young hearts,
And sting where they are cherish'd.

APOLLONIUS.

Your guess is shrewd ;

Nay, excellent enough to have been my own.
But, hark you, I have read in elder oracles
Than ever you will quote, the fact which backs me.
In Greece, in the midst of Greece, it hath been known,
And attested upon oath, i' the faith of multitudes,
That such true snakes have been—real hissing serpents,
Though outwardly like women.
With one of such, a youth,—a hopeful youth,
Sober, discreet, and able to subdue
His passions otherwise,—even like our Lycius,—
For a fortnight lived, in a luxury of wealth,
Till suddenly she vanish'd, palace and all,
Like the shadow of a cloud.

JULIUS.

The dainty fable !

But now unto the proof. Methinks this sounds
Like a real door (*knocking*) ; a cloud scarce wars so,
But when Jove strikes it with a thunderbolt.
I'll tell you, sir,
She is a wanton, and that's quite enough
To perish a world of wealth.

[PICUS comes to the door.

Ho, sirrah ! fellow !

Is your lady now within ?

PIOUS.

No, sir, she's out.

Something hath put her out—she will see nobody.

She's ill, she's grievous bad—her head won't bear

The rout of company.

[A loud shout within.]

APOLLONIUS.

Why, then, I think

The medical conclave might observe more quiet.

Look, knave ! are these her grave, her learn'd physicians ?

Well met, sirs.

[Another shout, and CURIO, &c., issue forth.]

CURIO.

That's as may be. Ha ! old mastiff !

Go to your kennel.

JULIUS.

You are just in time, sirs,

To settle our dispute : we have a gage on't,

The sophist here and I.

There is one lives in that house—(*pointing to LAMIA'S*)—how
would you call her ?

A woman ?

CURIO.

Ay ; and sure a rare one,

As I have proved upon her lips.

[LAMIA opens a window gently and listens.]

GALLO.

Ay, marry, have we ?

She was kind enough, for our poor sakes, to send

One Lycius, her late suitor, on an errand

That will make him footsore.

CURIO.

Yes, a sort of summons,

Cunningly forged to bid him haste to his father,

Who lay in the jaws of death. Lord, how he'll swear

To find the old cock quite well !

JULIUS.

This is too true. *[To APOLLONIUS.]*

I left our father but this very morn

The halest of old men. He was then on his way
Towards this city, on some state affair.
They'll encounter upon the road!

APOLLONIUS.

Here is some foul and double damn'd deception.

[LAMIA, *by signs, assents to this reflection.*

I'll catechise myself. Here, sir—you—you, [To CURIO.
Who have gazed upon this witch, touch'd her, and talk'd with
her,

How know you she is woman, flesh and blood,
True clay and mortal lymph, and not a mockery
Made up of infernal elements of magic!
Can'st swear she is no cloud,—no subtle ether,—
No fog, bepainted with deluding dyes,—
No cheating underplot,—no covert shape,
Making a filthy masquerade of nature.
I say, how know ye this?

CURIO.

How? by my senses.

If I nipp'd her cheek, till it brought the white and red,
I wot she is no fog.

APOLLONIUS.

Fie on the senses!

What are the senses but our worst arch-traitors?
What is a madman but a king betray'd
By the corrupted treason of his senses?
His robe a blanket, and his sceptre a straw,
His crown his bristled hair.
Fie on the shallow senses! What doth swear
Such perjuries as the senses?—what give birth
To such false rumours, and base verdicts render
In the very spite of truth? Go to: thy senses
Are bond slaves, both to madness and to magic,
And all the mind's disease. I say the senses
Deceive thee, though they say a stone's a stone.
And thou wilt swear by them an oath, forsooth,
And say the outer woman is utter woman,

And not a whit a snake ? Hark ! there's my answer.

[LAMIA closes the window violently.

That noise shall be my comment.

GALLO.

He talks in riddles,

Like a sphinx lapp'd in a blanket. Gentles—Curio—

Let us leave him to his wisdom.

APOLLONIUS.

Aye, I'll promise

'Twill dive far deeper than your feather wits

Into some mysteries.

[Going towards the door.

CURIO.

There's one I know in her house,

By name Mercutius, a most savage fellow :

I commend ye to his wrath.

[Exeunt CURIO, GALLO, &c

APOLLONIUS.

So, get ye gone,

Ye unregarded whelps.

JULIUS.

But will you in

Whether she will or no ?

APOLLONIUS.

Indeed I mean it.

Sirrah (to PICUS), lead on. I'll charge you with your message.

[Exeunt.

SCENE VII.

A Chamber in LAMIA's House. Enter MERCUTIUS in a distracted manner.

MERCUTIUS.

Where is this haunting witch ?—not here ! not here !—

Why then for a little rest and unlook'd calm,

Aye, such a calm,

VOL. I

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As the shipmate curses on the stagnate sea
 Under the torrid zone, that bakes his deck
 Till it burns the sole of his foot. My purpose idles,
 But my passions burn without pause; O how this hot
 And scarlet plague runs boiling through my veins
 Like a molten lava! I'm all parch'd up.
 There's not a shady nook throughout my brain
 For a quiet thought to lie—no, not a spring
 Of coolness left in my heart.—If I have any name,
 It is Fever, who is all made up of fire,
 Of pangs—deliriums—raving ecstasies,—
 And desperate impulse—ha! a foot!—I know it!—
 Now then, I'll ambush here, and come upon her
 Like a wild boar from a thicket.

*[He hides himself behind an arras, LAMIA enters holding her forehead
 betwixt her palms.]*

LAMIA.

This should be a real head—or 'twould not throb so—
 Who ever doubts it!
 I would he had these racking pains within;
 Ay—and those he hath set in my heart, to drive him mad.
 How now, sir!

Enter PICUS.

PICUS.

There are two below, beseech you
 For a conference. The one's a wrinkled greybeard,
 The other—

LAMIA.

You need not name. I will see neither;
 And tell them—look,—with a copy of this frown,
 If they congregate again beneath my eaves,
 I have that will hush their twitting.

[Exit PICUS.]

Why must I reap
 These unearn'd spites where I have sown no hate?
 Do the jealous gods
 Stir up these canker'd spirits to pursue me?
 Another! (*MERCUTIUS comes forward*) What brings thee hither?

MERCUTIUS (*gloomily*).

I do not know,—

If love, or hate—indeed I do not know,—
 Or whether a twine of both,—they're so entangled.
 Mayhap to clasp thee to my heart, and kiss thee,—
 To fondle thee,—or tear thee,—I do not know !
 Whether I come to die, or work thy death,
 Whether to be thy tyrant, or thy slave,
 In truth, I do not know.
 But that some potent yearning draws me to thee,
 Something, as if those lips were rich and tempting,
 And worthy of caressing,—fondly endear'd—
 And something as if a tortured devil within me
 Sought revenges of his pangs :—I cannot answer
 Which of these brings me hither.

LAMIA.

Then prythee hence,

Till that be analysed.

MERCUTIUS.

Ha ! ha ! turn back :

Why if I am the tiger—here's my prey—
 Or if the milk-mild dove—here is my choice—
 Do you think I shall turn back howe'er it be ?—
 Let the embrace prove which. Nay, do not shrink,—
 If an utter devil press into thy arms,
 Thyself invoked him !—

LAMIA.

Ah ! I know by this

Your bent is evil !

MERCUTIUS.

Then 'twas evil born !—

As it works 'twas wrought on—look—say what I am,
 For I have no recognisance of myself.
 Am I wild beast or man—civil or savage—
 Reasoning or brutal—or gone utter mad,—
 So am I as thou turn'd me,—hellish or heavenly,
 The slavish subject of thy influence,—

I know not what I am,—nor how I am,
But by thy own enforcement—come to force thee,
Being passion-mad.

LAMIA.

How have I wrought hither ?
I would thou wert away !

MERCUTIUS.

Why dost thou sit then
I' the middle of a whirlpool drawing me unto thee ;
My brain is dizzy and my heart is sick,
With the circles I have made round thee and round thee !
Till I dash into thy arms !—

LAMIA.

There shalt thou never !
Go ! desperate man ;—away !—and fear thy Gods,
Or else the hot indignation in my eyes
Will blast thee. O, beware ! I have within me
A dangerous nature, which if thou provoke,
Acts cruelly. Ne'er chafe me ; thou had'st better
Ruffle a scorpion than the thing I am !—
Away !
Or I'll bind thy bones till they crack !—

MERCUTIUS.

Ha ! ha ! dost threaten ?
Why then come ruin, anguishes, or death,—
Being goaded onward by my headlong fate
I'll clasp thee !—
Though there be sugar'd venom on thy lips
I'll drink it to the dregs—though there be plagues
In thy contagious touch—or in thy breath
Putrid infections—though thou be more cruel
Than lean-ribb'd tigers—thirsty and open-fang'd,
I will be as fierce a monster for thy sake,
And grapple thee.

LAMIA.

Would Lycius were here !

MERCUTIUS.

Ha! would'st thou have him gash'd and torn in strips
 As I would scatter him? then so say I
 "Would Lycius were here!" I have oft clench'd
 My teeth in that very spite.

LAMIA.

Thou ruthless devil!
 To bear him so bloody a will!—Why then, come hither,
 We are a fit pair.

[MERCUTIUS embracing her, she stabs him in the back with a small dagger.

MERCUTIUS (*falling*).

O thou false witch!
 Thou hast prick'd me to the heart! Ha! what a film
 Falls from my eyes!—or have the righteous Gods
 Transform'd me a beast for this! Thou crawling spite,
 Thou hideous—venemous— [Dies.

LAMIA.

Let the word choke thee!
 I know what I am. Thou wilful desperate fool
 To charge upon the spikes!—thy death be upon thee!—
 Why would'st thou have me sting? Heaven knows I had spared
 thee,
 But for thy menace of a dearer life.
 O! Lycius! Lycius!
 I have been both woman and serpent for thy sake—
 Perchance to be scorn'd in each:—I have but gored
 This ill-starr'd man in vain!—hush, methought he stirr'd;
 I'll give him another thrust (*stabs the body*); there—lie thou
 quiet.
 What a frown he hath upon his face! May the Gods ne'er
 mention it
 In their thunders, nor set the red stain of his blood
 For a sign of wrath in the sky!—O thou poor wretch!
 Not thee dull clod!—but for myself I weep—
 The sport of such malicious destinies!
 Why was I heiress of these mortal gifts
 Perishing all whether I love or hate?

Nay, come out of sight [To the body.
With thy dismal puckering look,—'twill fright the world
Out of its happiness. [She drags the body aside, and covers it with drapery.

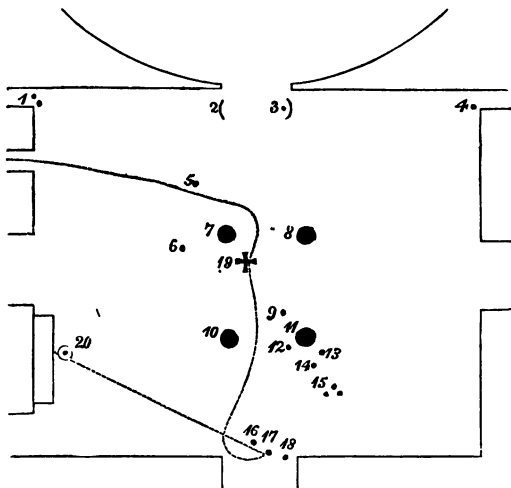
Would I could throw

A thicker curtain on thee—but I see thee
All through and through, as though I had
The eyes of a God within ; alas, I fear
I am here all human, and have that fierce thing
They call a conscience !

[Exit.

DEATH OF MR. PERCEVAL.

[With the annexed plan of the lobby it was intended to engrave the fatal pistol, of the exact size; but its entire dimensions a little exceeded the length of this page. I have, therefore, merely to state that it was strong, with a wide bore, and the barrel, as nearly as possible, three inches long.]



PLAN OF THE LOBBY.

- 7, 8, 10, 11, are the pillars which support the ceiling.
- 1, Mr. Eastaff at the door of the Vote-office.
- 2 and 3, Messrs. Taylor and Kennedy, the door-keepers at the entrance into the house, at the farther side of the lobby.
- 5, 6, 9, 12, and 13, Mr. W. Smith, Lord F. Osborne, Mr. Burrell, M.P.s, Mr. Burgess, and Mr. Dowling—I am not precise as to the exact place, but they were nearly so situated.
- 15, Mr. Boys, a Solicitor, and several persons from Ramsgate engaged upon a bill concerning the pier. This Mr. Boys was an important witness, though not called upon at the trial. The other marks indicate parties whom circumstances did not bring forward to the knowledge of the writer.
- 16, 17, and 18, were Bellingham, Mr. Perceval, and Mr. Jordan, at the folding door which gives admission to the lobby; and in their relative situations, when the mortal crime was perpetrated.
- 19, Where Mr. Perceval fell, and where he was carried, as indicated, into the Speaker's room.
- 20, The bench on which the assassin seated himself.

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